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DOBELL COLLECTION

Local Sonnets &c.

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36 Dorset

TRANSLATIONS

AND

POEMS.

FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION.

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PREFACE.

The first part of this book consists of a compilation of Italian poems with metrical translations. The editions used are,—Dante, Opere Minori, ed. Fraticelli, Firenze, 1861; Petrarca, Milano, 1805; Michelangelo, ed. Guasti,* Firenze, 1863; Vittoria Colonna, Roma, 1840; Guido Cavalcanti, sonnet 21, ed. Cicciaporci, Firenze, 1813, sonnet 3, and also Lapo Gianni, Raccolta di Rime antiche Toscane, Palermo, 1817; Cino da Pistoia, ed.

* No previous edition contains the genuine text.

Ciampi, Pisa, 1813 ; Rinaldo d' Aquino, Trucchi Poesie Italiane inedite, Prato, 1846.

The second part contains sonnets relating to the Isle of Purbeck in Dorsetshire, and other verses chiefly of a personal or subjective character.

The Reader is requested to make the following corrections: Read, page 8, line 10, uomo; 60, 10, consigli; 114, 11, parole.; 128, 8, sale.; 132, 3, Nè; 164, 5, Quando.

PART THE FIRST.

Translations from

DANTE ALIGHIERI, FRANCESCO PETRARCA,

MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI,

VITTORIA COLONNA,

AND OTHERS.

TRANSLATIONS AND POEMS.

INTRODUCTORY.

When entering first Italian Galleries,
The student hurries on with wandering gaze,
From room to room he strays;
What need to choose where all has power to please?
But joy soon learns degrees,
And he, the rest neglected,
Before the master-pieces stands admiring,
In one small room selected;
And those alone he sees:
Until from reverence to love aspiring,
His artist-spirit firing,
The Masters' works he strives to imitate.
First sure, and then with doubt,
O'er touches painted out,
He paints some copies, felt inadequate.
So I, 'mongst Tuscan poets wont to roam,
For friends home-keeping, bring poor copies home.

DANTE.

Sonetto II.

Guido, vorrei che tu e Lapo ed io
Fossimo presi per incantamento,
E messi ad un vascel, ch' ad ogni vento
Per mare andasse a voler vostro e mio;
Sicchè fortuna, od altro tempo rio
Non ci potesse dare impedimento,
Anzi, vivendo sempre in un talento,
Di stare insieme crescesse il disio.
E monna Vanna e monna Bice poi,
Con quella ch' è sul numero del trenta,
Con noi ponesse il buono incantatore:
E quivi ragionar sempre d' amore:
E ciascuna di lor fosse contenta,
Siccome io credo che sariamo noi.

DANTE.

Sonnet II.

Guido,* I would that Lapo,† you, and I
Were ta'en, and put by some enchanter's spell
Into a bark, which, though cross winds befel,
As wished by you and me o'er sea should fly;
So that no storm or ill might terrify,
Or to our pleasure be an obstacle,
But that joint life, and aye agreeing well,
Might raise our wish to live together high.
The Ladies Vanna, Beatrice, and she,
Who comes the Thirtieth ‡ in my rhymes, should be
By aid of that kind wizard too brought there.
Our talk to be of love continually,
And each of them well pleased and free from care,
Like pleasure too, I think, would be our share.

* Guido Cavalcanti. † Lapo Gianni.

‡ A lady beloved by Lapo Gianni, the Thirtieth in a lost poem by Dante on the sixty fairest women of Florence.

GUIDO CAVALCANTI.

Sonetto III.

O Donna mia non vedestu colui,
Che sullo core mi tenea la mano,
Quand' io ti rispondia fiochetto e piano
Per la temenza degli colpi sui?
El fu Amore, che trovando vui
Meco ristette, che venia lontano
A guisa d'uno arcier presto soriano
Acconcio sol per ancidere altrui:
E trasse poi degli occhi miei sospiri,
I quai si gittan dallo cor sì forte,
Ch' io mi parti' sbigottito fuggendo:
Allor mi parse di seguir la morte,
Accompagnato di quelli martiri,
Che soglion consumare altrui piangendo.

GUIDO CAVALCANTI.

Sonnet III.

O Lady Him didst thou not see,
Whose hand had grasped my heart, nor know
That faint and low I answered thee,
Only because I feared his blow?
'Twas Love who, come from far, found me
With thee, and then refused to go:
As Syrian archer armed, was He,
And prompt to slay folk held his bow.
Then to my eyes quick tears he brought,
And from my heart so deep I sighed,
I fled thee, yielding to my fears;
But then Death followed me, I thought,
And the same woes accompanied,
Which oft waste men away in tears.

GUIDO CAVALCANTI.

Sonetto XXI.

a dante alighieri.

Se vedi Amore, assai ti prego, Dante,
In parte, là' ve Lapo sia presente,
Che non ti gravi di por sì la mente,
Che mi riscrivi, s' egli il chiama amante:
E se la donna gli sembra aitante,
E se fa vista di parer servente:
Che molte fiate così fatta gente
Suol, per gravezza, d' Amor far sembiante;
Tu sai che ne la corte, là ove regna
Non può servire nomo, che sia vile,
A Donna, che là dentro sia perduta:
Se la soffrenza lo servente ajuta,
Puoi di leggier conoscer nostro stile,
Lo quale porta di mercede insegna.

GUIDO CAVALCANTI.

Sonnet XXI.

TO DANTE ALIGHIERI.

If you, my Dante (this I pray
You much), see Love with Lapo near,
Take heed, and then if Love you hear
Call Lapo lover, write and say;
And tell me, if his Lady's sway
Seem kind, and he in guise appear
Of gallant, since such folk, I fear,
When tired of work, at loving play.
You know, where in his Court, Love reigns,
No one can serve, but he who's true,
A Lady who is wand'ring there;
And if his patience favour gains,
The marks of that are known to you,
Your style, and mine, the emblems bear.

LAPO GIANNI.

Ballata XIII.

Questa rosa novella,
Che fa piacer sua gaja giovanezza,
Mostra, che gentilezza,
Amor, sia nata per virtù di quella.
S'io fossi sufficiente
Di raccontar sua maraviglia nuova,
Diria come natura l' ha adornata.
Ma s' io non son possente
Di saper allegar verace prova,
Dillo tu, Amor; che sarà me' laudata.
Ben dico, una fiata,
Levando gli occhi per mirarla fiso,
Presemi 'l dolce riso,
E gli occhi suoi lucenti, come stella.
Allor bassai li miei
Per lo suo raggio, che mi giunse al core

LAPO GIANNI.

Ballad XIII.

See the fresh half-opened rose,
Her youthful beauty glad and gay,
And the winsome charms display,
Which she to her own sweetness owes.
What rich gifts, I glad would tell,
Kind nature gave this marvel new,
If my weak powers discerned the way
Proofs to find to prove them well;
For truth ill-proved is deemed untrue.
Do thou then prove it, Love, I pray.
But I know, that I, one day,
Upraised my eyes to her awhile,
And they took me, her sweet smile,
And eyes, whence star-like light o'erflows.
Though soon lowered, through my eyes
Her brightness entering, filled my soul,

Entrò in quel punto, ch' io la riguardai.
Tu dicesti; costei
Mi piace signoreggi il tuo valore;
E servo alla tua vita le sarai.
Ond' io ringrazio assai,
Dolce Signor, la tua somma grandezza,
Che io vivo in allegrezza,
Pensando a cui mia alma hai fatta ancella.
Ballata giovanzella;
Dirai a quella, ch' ha la bionda trezza,
Ch' Amor per la sua altezza
M' ha comandato io sia servente d'ella.

In that short gazing, suddenly;
And Thou cried'st, recognize
Her, whom I will o'er thee to rule;
Life-long servant thou shalt be.
Hence I, grateful, bring to Thee,
Due thanks, my Sov'reign, great and kind;
For sweet gladness fills my mind,
From thoughts of her, joy ever grows.
Young and simple, tripping goes
To her, the auburn-tressed, this lay;
And the service, Ballad say,
Which Love's commands on me impose.

DANTE.

Sonetto X.

Amore e cor gentil sono una cosa,
Siccome il Saggio in suo dittato pone:
E così senza l' un l' altro esser osa,
Com' alma razional senza ragione.
Fagli natura, quando è amorosa,
Amor per sire, e 'l cor per sua magione,
Dentro allo qual dormendo si riposa
Talvolta brieve, e tal lunga stagione.
Beltate appare in saggia donna pui
Che piace agli occhi sì, che dentro al core
Nasce un desio della cosa piacente:
E tanto dura talora in costui,
Che fa svegliar lo spirito d' amore:
E simil face in donna uomo valente.

DANTE.

Sonnet X.

But one are love and heart refined,
(This is the Master's doctrine plain),
Such heart can so leave love behind,
As reason gone, thought can remain.
Both, Nature forms, when feeling kind,
Makes Love in the heart his home to reign,
Though there has Love in slumber blind,
Long time anon, oft shorter, lain.
When seen some lady fair and pure,
A pleasure enters through the eyes,
Giving at heart to longing birth,
Which will sometimes so long endure,
That wakened Love it makes arise;
So works in woman manly worth.

DANTE.

Sonetto XVI.

Io mi sentii svegliar dentro allo core
Uno spirto amoroso che dormia:
E poi vidi venir da lunge Amore
Allegro sì, che appena il conoscia,
Dicendo: Or pensa pur di farmi onore:
E'n ciascuna parola sua ridia.
E, poco stando meco il mio signore,
Guardando in quella parte, onde venia,
Io vidi monna Vanna e monna Bice,
Venire invêr lo loco là, ov' i' era,
L'una appresso dell' altra meraviglia.
E sì come la mente mi ridice,
Amor mi disse: Questa è Primavera,
E quella ha nome Amor, sì mi somiglia.

DANTE.

Sonnet XVI.

A loving spirit wake inside
At heart, I felt, which sleeping lay;
When Love from far off come, I spied,
Scarce recognized, he looked so gay.
"Now learn to honour me," he cried;
Each word said smiling, as in play.
Whilst he, my master, stayed, I eyed
His track, and coming saw that way,
Towards the place where we both sat,
The ladies, Vanna, Beatrice,
Fair marvel this, fair marvel that.
As I remember, he said this,—
"The first is Spring, the second know
As Love, by name, she's like me so."

DANTE.

Sonetto XVII.

Tanto gentile e tanto onesta pare
La donna mia, quand' ella altrui saluta,
Ch' ogni lingua divien tremando muta,
E gli occhi non ardiscon di guardare.
Ella sen va, sentendosi laudare,
Benignamente d' umiltà vestuta,
E par che sia una cosa venuta
Di cielo in terra a miracol mostrare.
Mostrasi sì piacente a chi la mira,
Che dà per gli occhi una dolcezza al core,
Che intender non la può chi non la prova.
E' par che della sua labbia si muova
Uno spirto soave e pien d' amore,
Che va dicendo all' anima: Sospira.

DANTE.

Sonnet XVII.

My lady looks, friends greeting low,
So winsome in sweet dignity,
Each tongue sinks trembling silently,
To raise their eyes, men scarcely know.
She, hearing praise, is wont to go
With meekness clad and courtesy,
And seems from Heaven come purposely,
On Earth, a miracle to show.
She gives such pleasure to the eye,
That sweetness fills the heart, above
Imagining; it needs to try:
And from her face, there seems to move
A spirit sweet and full of love,
The soul still softly bidding,—"Sigh."

DANTE.

Sonetto XXVIII.

Gentil pensiero, che parla di vui,
Sen viene a dimorar meco sovente,
E ragiona d' amor sì dolcemente,
Che face consentir lo core in lui.
L' anima dice al cor: Chi è costui,
Che viene a consolar la nostra mente;
Ed è la sua virtù tanto possente,
Ch' altro pensier non lascia star con nui?
Ei le risponde: O anima pensosa,
Questi è uno spiritel nuovo d' amore,
Che reca innanzi a me li suoi desiri:
E la sua vita e tutto il suo valore
Mosse dagli occhi di quella pietosa,
Che si turbava de' nostri martìri.

DANTE.

Sonnet XXVIII.

A tender thought comes oft to me,
Of you to whisper, and remain,
And sings of love, so sweet a strain,
My heart entranced, must, needs, agree.
Says Soul to Heart, "Pray who is he,
That cometh to console our pain,
And so o'erpowering makes his reign,
Scarce other thought in us can be?"
The answer this:—"Soul full of thought,
He is of love a spriteling new,
Who his desires to me has brought;
His life and forces all, he drew
From Her, the loving one, who knows,
And sees with pitying eyes, our woes."

DANTE.

Sonetto XXXVII.

Se vedi gli occhi miei di pianger vaghi,
Per novella pietà che il cor mi strugge,
Per lei ti priego, che da te non fugge,
Signor, che tu di tal piacer gli svaghi;
Con la tua dritta man cioè che paghi
Chi la giustizia uccide, e poi rifugge
Al gran tiranno, del cui tosco sugge,
Ch' egli ha già sparto e vuol che 'l mondo allaghi,
E messo ha di paura tanto gelo
Nel cuor de' tuoi fedei, che ciascun tace:
Ma tu, fuoco d' amor, lume del cielo,
Questa virtù, che nuda e fredda giace,
Levala su vestita del tuo velo;
Chè senza lei non è qui in terra pace.

DANTE.

Sonnet XXXVII.

My heart, oh God, is wrung by this new woe,
And if thou see'st the tear which fain would start,
I pray by Her,* who never can depart
From Thee, cause wish to weep from me to go;
I mean, thy right hand's vengeance let him † know,
Who justice slays, and then with coward heart,
The tyrant ‡ seeks, whose venom, poured with art,
He drinks, the bane designed o'er all to flow;
That King, who midst thy Faithful, icy fear
Has spread, and silent awe,—each holds his peace,
But Thou, oh light of Heaven and fire of love,
True Virtue, cold and naked lying here,
Raise up, and clothe with garments from above;
Since without Her ne'er strife on earth can cease.

* Divine Wisdom. † Pope Boniface VIII.
‡ Philip le Bel? or Charles de Valois?

DANTE.

Sonetto XL.

a cino da pistoia.

Io mi credea del tutto esser partito
Da queste vostre rime, messer Cino;
Chè si conviene omai altro cammino
Alla mia nave, già lunge dal lito:
Ma perch' i' ho di voi più volte udito,
Che pigliar vi lasciate ad ogni uncino,
Piacemi di prestare un pocolino
A questa penna lo stancato dito.
Chi s' innamora (siccome voi fate)
E ad ogni piacer si lega e scioglie,
Mostra ch' Amor leggiermente il saetti:
Se 'l vostro cuor si piega in tante voglie,
Per Dio vi prego che voi 'l correggiate,
Sì che s' accordi i fatti a' dolci detti.

DANTE.

Sonnet XL.

TO CINO DA PISTOIA.

I thought I'd left and quite passed o'er,
Cino, those rhymes, by you still writ,
Since other courses now befit,
My battered bark, so far from shore.
But, as I hear, now more and more,
Whate'er the bait, you swallow it,
I choose to hold, a little bit,
My pen in fingers tired and sore.
Who falls in love, as you do still,
With varying fancies bound and free,
Proves Love wounds him with feeble blow:
If you thus stray from will to will,
Pray God, more staid and firm to grow,
So deeds may suit sweet poesy.

CINO DA PISTOIA.

Sonetto CXII.

ALL' ANNUNZIO DELLA MORTE DI SELVAGGIA.

Deh! non mi domandar perch' io sospiri,
Ch' io ho testè una parola udita,
E svariat' ha tutti i miei desiri:
Fuor della terra la mia Donna è gita;
Ed ha lasciato me 'n pene, e martìri,
Col cuore afflitto, e gli occhi l' han smarrita.
Parmi sentir, che ormai la morte tiri
A fine, oh lasso! la mia grave vita.
Rimaser gli occhi di lor luce oscuri
Sì, ch' altra donna non posso mirare,
Ma credendogli un poco rappagare,
Veder fo loro spesso gli usci e' muri
Della casa, ù s' andaro a innamorare
Di quella, che lo cor fa sospirare.

CINO DA PISTOIA.

Sonnet CXII.

ON THE TIDINGS OF THE DEATH OF SELVAGGIA.

"Why sighest thou?" Ah ask not why;
But late, the tidings I have known,
And all my wishes shattered lie,
She, whom I loved, from Earth has flown,
And I am left behind, to sigh,
To see her ne'er, to live alone:
My sad life ending, death draws nigh,
That, now to me, my heart has shown.
My eyes have lost their only light,
On ladies they hence nevermore
Can gaze, their one poor joy the sight
Of that dear house, that well-known door,
Where they went oft, ere came this night,
To Her, for whom my tears now pour.

PETRARCA.

Sonetto XXVIII.

Solo e pensoso i più deserti campi
Vo misurando a passi tardi e lenti;
E gli occhi porto per fuggir intenti
Dove vestigio uman la rena stampi.
Altro schermo non trovo che mi scampi
Dal manifesto accorger delle genti:
Perchè negli atti d' allegrezza spenti
Di fuor si legge com' io dentro avvampi:
Sì, ch' io mi credo omai, che monti e piagge,
E fiumi, e selve sappian di che tempre
Sia la mia vita, ch' è celata altrui.
Ma pur sì aspre vie, nè sì selvagge
Cercar non so, ch' Amor non venga sempre
Ragionando con meco, ed io con lui.

PETRARCH.

Sonnet XXVIII.

Thoughtful, alone, the most deserted land
I measure o'er, with nerveless steps and slow,
With watching eyes, prepared to fly, I go,
Wherever human steps impress the sand.
No other guard or refuge is at hand
'Gainst conscious looks of folk, who plainly know
My ill; a mien with all joy quenched must show
By outward marks how flames within the brand.
Hence, as I surely now believe, is known
To mountains, shores, the woods, the streams, alone,
My life withdrawn from men in secrecy.
But yet no path so savage, lonely, dim,
I know to find, where Love comes not to me,
Conversing aye with me, and I with him.

PETRARCA.

Sonetto LXIX.

Erano i capei d' oro all' aura sparsi,
Che 'n mille dolci nodi gli avvolgea;
E 'l vago lume oltra misura ardea
Di quei begli occhi ch' or ne son sì scarsi;
E 'l viso di pietosi color farsi,
Non so se vero o falso mi parea:
I' che l' esca amorosa al petto avea,
Qual maraviglia, se di subit' arsi?
Non era l' andar suo cosa mortale,
Ma d' angelica forma; e le parole
Sonavan altro, che pur voce umana.
Uno spirto celeste, un vivo Sole
Fu quel ch' i' vidi: e se non fosse or tale;
Piaga per allentar d' arco non sana.

PETRARCH.

Sonnet LXIX.

Her golden tresses were spread loose to air,
And by the wind in thousand tangles blown,
And a sweet light beyond all brightness shone
From those grand eyes, though now of brilliance bare;
And did that face a flush of feeling wear?
I now thought yes, then no, the truth unknown.
My heart was then for love like tinder grown,
What wonder if it flamed with sudden flare?
Not like the walk of mortals was her walk,
But as when angels glide; and seemed her talk
With other than mere human voice, to flow.
A spirit heavenly, a living sun
I saw, and if she be no longer so,
A wound heals not, because the bow's undone.

PETRARCA.

Sonetto CII.

S' Amor non è, che dunque è quel ch' i' sento?
Ma s' egli è Amor, per Dio che cosa, e quale?
Se buona, ond' è l' effetto aspro mortale?
Se ria, ond' è sì dolce ogni tormento?
S' a mia voglia ardo, ond' è il pianto e 'l lamento?
S' a mal mio grado, il lamentar che vale?
O viva morte, o dilettoso male,
Come puoi tanto in me, s' io nol consento?
E s' io 'l consento, a gran torto mi doglio.
Fra sì contrarj venti in frale barca
Mi trovo in alto mar senza governo,
Sì lieve di saver, d' error sì carca,
Ch' i' medesmo non so quel ch' io mi voglio,
E tremo a mezza state, ardendo il verno.

PETRARCH.

Sonnet CII.

If 'tis not love, what have I ta'en?
If love, 'tis—what? what kind of thing?
If good, whence comes its deadly sting?
If bad, why is so sweet each pain?
If I love willing, why complain?
If not, what good from tears can spring?
Can this live death, pain pleasuring,
If I resist, power o'er me gain?
If I assent, complaints suit ill.
'Midst winds so cross, in bark so slight,
I'm far at sea with rudder lost,
My load of error deep, so light
In wisdom, I know not my will,
And freeze in summer, burn in frost.

PETRARCA.

Sonetto CV.

Fiamma dal ciel su le tue treccie piova,
Malvagia, che dal fiume e dalle ghiande
Per l' altru' impoverir se' ricca e grande;
Poi che di mal oprar tanto ti giova:
Nido di tradimenti, in cui si cova
Quanto mal per lo mondo oggi si spande:
Di vin serva, di letti e di vivande;
In cui lussuria fa l' ultima prova.
Per le camere tue fanciulle e vecchi
Vanno trescando, e Belzebub in mezzo
Co' mantici, e col foco, e con gli specchi.
Già non fostu nudrita in piume al rezzo,
Ma nuda al vento, e scalza fra gli stecchi:
Or vivi sì, ch' a Dio ne venga il lezzo.

PETRARCH.

Sonnet CV.

AGAINST THE PAPAL COURT.

May flame from Heaven upon thy tresses rain,
Wretch! who from acorns and the stream alone,
By robbing others, great and rich art grown,
In evil actions, ever finding gain:
Thou nest of treasons! where is hatched the bane,
That thence, o'er all the world, of late, has flown:
Thee, Glutton! wine and lust, as bond-slave own,
In thee their utmost proof and height attain.
Thy halls, young girls and amorous graybeards throng,
Gay triflers, whom Beelzebub is among,
With bellows, fire, and mirrors, ready there.
Thou wert not reared in down, and covered well,
But shoeless 'midst the thorns, to cold winds bare:
But now thy life sends up to God rank smell.

PETRARCA.

Sonetto CLXXXIV.

Onde tolse Amor l' oro e di qual vena
Per far due treccie bionde? e 'n quali spine
Colse le rose, e 'n qual piaggia le brine
Tenere e fresche, e diè lor polso e lena?
Onde le perle, in ch' ei frange ed affrena
Dolci parole, oneste e pellegrine?
Onde tante bellezze, e sì divine
Di quella fronte più che 'l ciel serena?
Da quali Angeli mosse, e di qual spera
Quel celeste cantar che mi disface
Si, che m' avanza omai da disfar poco?
Di qual sol nacque l' alma luce altera
Di que' begli occhi, ond' i' ho guerra e pace,
Che mi cuocono 'l cor in ghiaccio e 'n foco?

PETRARCH.

Sonnet CLXXXIV.

Whence did Love take the gold, from what rich vein,
To make those auburn tresses,—the roses, where?
That fresh and tender hoar-frost, 'neath what air,
Giving them pulse and breath, and whence obtain
Those pearls, which guide and modify, restrain,
The flow of words, sincere, and sweet, and rare?
And of that countenance, as calm and fair,
As is the Heaven, whence the beauties gain?
Came from what angels, in what higher skies,
That heavenly singing, which undoes me so,
There wants but little to undo my life?
Sprang from what sun, in those enchanting eyes,
The sweet and lofty light, whence peace and strife
To me, and heart in ice and fiery glow?

PETRARCA.

Sonetto CLXXXVIII.

S' una fede amorosa, un cor non finto,
Un languir dolce, un desiar cortese;
S' oneste voglie in gentil foco accese,
S' un lungo error in cieco laberinto;
Se nella fronte ogni pensier dipinto,
Od in voci interrotte appena intese
Or da paura or da vergogna offese;
S' un pallor di viola, e d' amor tinto;
S' aver altrui più caro che sè stesso;
Se lagrimar e sospirar mai sempre,
Pascendosi di duol, d' ira e d' affanno;
S' arder da lunge ed agghiacciar da presso,
Son le cagion ch' amando i' mi distempre,
Vostro, Donna, 'l peccato, e mio fia 'l danno.

PETRARCH.

Sonnet CLXXXVIII.

If loving faith, a heart that does not feign,
Sweet languishing and courteous longing glances,
Fair wishes, which Love fires and still enhances,
In a blind maze to wander long in vain,
If thoughts upon the features written plain,
Or spoken in faint words, 'midst absent trances,
To which, now shame, now fear, are hinderances,
If lovers' pallor tinged with violet stain,
To hold another than oneself more dear,
Ever to weep and evermore to sigh,
On passion, anxious woe, to feed and pine,
Absent to burn, grow icy cold when near;
If these be what in loving makes me die,
Lady to thee the blame, the loss is mine.

PETRARCA.

Sonetto CCVII.

Due rose fresche, e colte in paradiso
L' altr' jer nascendo il dì primo di Maggio,
Bel dono, e d' un amante antiquo e saggio,
Tra duo minori egualmente diviso:
Con sì dolce parlar, e con un riso
Da far innamorar un uom selvaggio,
Di sfavillante ed amoroso raggio
E l' uno e l' altro fe' cangiare in viso.
Non vede un simil par d' amanti il Sole,
Dicea ridendo e sospirando insieme,
E stringendo ambedue, volgeasi attorno.
Così partia le rose e le parole,
Onde 'l cor lasso ancor s' allegra e teme.
O felice eloquenza! o lieto giorno!

PETRARCH.

Sonnet CCVII.

KING ROBERT'S GIFT OF ROSES TO PETRARCH AND LAURA.

Rose buds twain, culled May-day breaking,
(Sure the tree in heaven was growing),
Gave a lover old and knowing,
Younger lovers each one taking.
Then that Master smiled, love waking,
(Hard the heart not so set flowing),
Either face grew conscious, glowing,
Blushes coming, then forsaking.
"Ah no pair which this resembles,"
Said he smiling, though tears started,
"Sees the sun, as earth he measures."
Words and roses thus imparted,
Still my heart rejoices, trembles:
Ah well spoken! Day of pleasures!

PETRARCA.

Sonetto CCXXXII.

Che fai? che pensi? che pur dietro guardi
Nel tempo che tornar non pote omai,
Anima sconsolata? che pur vai
Giugnendo legne al foco ove tu ardi?
Le soavi parole e i dolci sguardi
Ch' ad un ad un descritti e dipint' hai,
Son levati da terra, ed è (ben sai)
Qui ricercargli intempestivo e tardi.
Deh non rinnovellar quel che n' ancide,
Non seguir più pensier vago fallace,
Ma saldo e certo ch' a buon fin ne guide.
Cerchiamo 'l Ciel, se qui nulla ne piace,
Che mal per noi quella beltà si vide,
Se viva e morta ne devea tor pace.

PETRARCH.

Sonnet CCXXXII.

What would'st, what doest thou? Why look behind
At yonder time which now knows no returning,
Sad Soul? And on the fire where thou art burning
Why heap fresh logs? And why new faggots bind?
Gone hence soft words, those glances sweet and kind,
Charms one by one described by thee still learning,
Nay painted, and it is too late, this yearning
(Thou know'st it well), those words and looks to find.
Renew not that which only can destroy,
And let that dear misleading fancy cease,
And firm sure thought be now our guide to right:
Aim we at Heaven, if nothing here brings joy,
Since for our ill that beauty met my sight,
If living, and dead too, it robs our peace.

PETRARCA.

Sonetto CCXXXVIII.

Se lamentar augelli, o verdi fronde
Mover soavemente all' aura estiva,
O roco mormorar di lucid' onde
S' ode d' una fiorita e fresca riva;
Là 'v' io seggia d' amor pensoso, e scriva;
Lei che 'l ciel ne mostrò, terra n' asconde,
Veggio ed odo ed intendo; ch' ancor viva
Di sì lontano a' sospir miei risponde.
Deh perchè innanzi tempo ti consume?
Mi dice con pietate: a che pur versi
Degli occhi tristi un doloroso fiume?
Di me non pianger tu, che miei dì fersi,
Morendo, eterni; e nell' eterno lume,
Quando mostrai di chiuder gli occhi, apersi.

PETRARCH.

Sonnet CCXXXVIII.

When birds complaining, and the green leaves near
Rustling softly, as the summer breezes sigh,
And murmurs hoarse, I hear, of waters clear,
This bank, all grass and flowery, flowing by,
Where I, on love still musing, writing, lie;
Whom Heaven once showed, the earth then hid, I hear,
And clearly see; she lives and from so high
She answers to my sighs which reach her ear:—
"Why wear, before thy time, thy life away?"
With tenderness she says, "and why still flows
That piteous stream of tears from mournful eyes?
For me weep not, for know, that death gave rise
To life immortal, in eternal day
My eyes but opened when they seemed to close."

PETRARCA.

Sonetto CCXLIV.

Nè mai pietosa madre al caro figlio,
Nè donna accesa al suo sposo diletto
Diè con tanti sospir, con tal sospetto
In dubbio stato sì fedel consiglio,
Come a me quella che 'l mio grave esiglio
Mirando dal suo eterno alto ricetto,
Spesso a me torna con l' usato affetto,
E di doppia pietate ornata il ciglio
Or di madre or d' amante: or teme, or' arde
D' onesto foco; e nel parlar mi mostra
Quel che 'n questo viaggio fugga o segua,
Contando i casi della vita nostra,
Pregando ch' al levar l' alma non tarde:
E sol quant' ella parla, ho pace o tregua.

PETRARCH.

Sonnet CCXLIV.

Nor tender mother e'er to darling child,
Nor loving lady gave to husband, e'er,
With sighs so many, with such anxious care,
Counsels so wise, in fortunes dark and wild;
As she bestows, who, joyless and exiled,
Sees me, from her seat eternal, lofty, where
She turns to me, with love which aye she bare,
Now doubly tender eyes, of Mother mild,
And then of lover; now she fears, then glows
With purest fire; and counselling she shows
What in this journey, I should seek and fly,
Telling the varying chances of our life,
Praying me haste to raise my soul on high;
Whilst she speaks, only, ends or stays my strife.

PETRARCA.

Sonetto CCLI.

Gli occhi di ch' io parlai sì caldamente,
E le braccia e le mani, e i piedi e 'l viso,
Che m' avean sì da me stesso diviso,
E fatto singular dall' altra gente;
Le crespe chiome d' ôr puro lucente,
E 'l lampeggiar dell' angelico riso,
Che solean far in terra un paradiso,
Poca polvere son, che nulla sente:
Ed io pur vivo: onde mi doglio e sdegno,
Rimaso senza 'l lume ch' amai tanto,
In gran fortuna e 'n disarmato legno.
Or sia qui fine al mio amoroso canto:
Secca è la vena dell' usato ingegno,
E la cetera mia rivolta in pianto.

PETRARCH.

Sonnet CCLI.

The eyes of which I spoke such loving thought,
The arms, the hands, and face, to beauty blended,
By which, I, rent from self, so oft ascended,
Cut off from other folk, and strangeness taught,
The hair, like gold to glistening ripples wrought,
The whole by flashing angel smiles attended,
Making this Earth like Heaven, a vision splendid,
Are now a little dust that feeleth nought.
And I yet live, whence angry suffering
To me, bereft of light, I held so dear,
My bark storm-tost, with mast and rigging gone.
Then let my loving music finish here,
Ceasing that stream of thought, when dried the spring,
My harp too now retuned to grief alone.

PETRARCA.

Sonetto CCLXXI.

Nè per sereno ciel ir vaghe stelle,
Nè per tranquillo mar legni spalmati,
Nè per campagne cavalieri armati,
Nè per bei boschi allegre fere e snelle;
Nè d' aspettato ben fresche novelle,
Nè dir d' amore in stili alti ed ornati,
Nè tra chiare fontane e verdi prati
Dolce cantare oneste donne e belle;
Nè altro sarà mai ch' al cor m' aggiunga;
Sì seco il seppe quella seppellire
Che sola agli occhi miei fu lume e speglio.
Noja m' è il viver sì gravosa e lunga,
Ch' i' chiamo il fine per lo gran desire
Di riveder cui non veder fu 'l meglio.

PETRARCH.

Sonnet CCLXXI.

Nor spangled stars, unclouded skies among,
Nor ships that glide sunlit o'er tranquil seas,
Nor deer seen gaily leaping through the trees,
Nor lancers 'midst the plains in glittering throng,
Nor fresh-brought news of good, expected long,
Nor lofty rhymes of love which flow with ease,
Nor 'midst clear streams, in arbours fanned by breeze,
Fair noble ladies singing some sweet song,
Nor aught of joy, can reach my heart, which lies
Buried with her, who took it to the grave,
The only light and mirror of my eyes.
My life, since then, has been long grief, unrest,
So that, to see her longing, death I crave,
Whom never to have seen had been far best.

PETRARCA.

Sonetto CCLXXIII.

Mente mia, che presaga de' tuoi danni
Al tempo lieto già pensosa e trista
Si intentamente nell' amata vista
Requie cercavi de' futuri affanni:
A gli atti, alle parole, al viso, ai panni,
Alla nova pietà con dolor mista,
Potei ben dir, se del tutto eri avvista:
Quest' è l' ultimo dì de' miei dolci anni.
Qual dolcezza fu quella, o miser' alma,
Come ardevamo in quel punto ch' i' vidi
Gli occhi i quai non devea riveder mai!
Quando a lor, come a duo amici più fidi,
Partendo, in guardia la più nobil salma,
I miei cari pensieri e 'l cor lasciai.

PETRARCH.

Sonnet CCLXXIII.

Presentiments of loss, thou hadst my mind,
In you glad time, sad thought with joy was blent,
And thou wert seeking, on the loved sight bent,
In memory, rest for coming ills, to find;
And when new tenderness, with grief combined,
In words, attire, and looks, was evident,
I might have said, my years of joy are spent
With this last day, had not my eyes been blind.
What sweetness filled thee, soul of joy bereft,
How flamed our conscious love, that instant when
I saw those eyes, I ne'er might see again!
And when, as to two faithful friends, I left
To them, departing, my more noble part
In trust, my dearest thoughts, my very heart.

PETRARCA.

Sonetto CCXCV.

Conobbi, quanto il ciel gli occhi m' aperse,
Quanto studio ed Amor m' alzaron l' ali;
Cose nove e leggiadre, ma mortali;
Che 'n un soggetto ogni stella cosperse.
L' altre tante si strane e sì diverse
Forme altere, celesti ed immortali,
Perchè non furo all' intelletto eguali,
La mia debile vista non sofferse.
Onde quant 'io di lei parlai, ne scrissi,
Ch' or per lodi anzi a Dio preghi mi rende,
Fu breve stilla d' infiniti abissi:
Che stile oltra l' ingegno non si stende;
E per aver uom gli occhi nel Sol fissi,
Tanto si vede men, quanto più splende.

PETRARCH.

Sonnet CCXCV.

I saw, so far as God clear eyes had lent,
So far as study, love, had taught to fly,
Things new and beautiful, yet doomed to die,
Which, to one person, lavish stars had sent:
Others, as many, strange and different,
Immortal lofty powers, from the sky,
Because above my mind they towered too high,
My eyes bore not, 'neath them I dazzled went.
All therefore I could say of her, or write,
Who, gone to God, my praise with prayers repays,
Was but a drop from ocean infinite:
For none his style above his mind can raise,
And he, who on the sun has fixed his sight,
The less can see, as brighter is the blaze.

PETRARCA.

Sonetto CCCXIII.

I' vo piangendo i miei passati tempi,
I quai posi in amar cosa mortale
Senza levarmi a volo, avend' io l' ale,
Per dar forse di me non bassi esempi.
Tu, che vedi i miei mali indegni ed empi,
Re del cielo invisibile, immortale,
Soccorri all' alma disviata e frale,
E 'l suo difetto di tua grazia adempi:
Sicchè, s' io vissi in guerra ed in tempesta,
Mora in pace ed in porto; e se la stanza
Fu vana, almen sia la partita onesta.
A quel poco di viver che m' avanza,
Ed al morir degni esser tua man presta:
Tu sai ben, che 'n altrui non ho speranza.

PETRARCH.

Sonnet CCCXIII.

I now am weeping, for the years passed by,
Wasted in loving but a mortal thing,
Though I could fly, not rising on the wing,
To leave some work, perhaps not far from high.
My deeds unworthy, impious, from the sky,
Thy realm, thou see'st, unseen, immortal King;
To me, astray and feeble, succour bring,
And with Thy grace, my soul's defect supply:
So that if tempest-tost, and oft in strife,
I lived, I yet may die in port, at peace,
And nobly quit, though spent in vain, my life.
Through my remaining years, so soon to cease,
Let Thy right hand, my guide, in dying, be
My stay; Thou know'st I have no hope but Thee.

Note.—The Translator is indebted to a friend for help in this sonnet, and in the revision of this volume throughout.

MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI.

Madrigale VII.

Per fido esempio alla mia vocazione
Nel parto mi fu data la bellezza,
Che d' ambo l' arti m' è lucerna e specchio.
S' altro si pensa, è falsa opinione.
Questo sol l' occhio porta a quella altezza
Ch' a pingere e scolpir qui m' apparecchio.
S' e giudizii temerari e sciocchi
Al senso tiran la beltà, che muove
E porta al cielo ogni intelletto sano;
Dal mortale al divin non vanno gli occhi
Infermi, e fermi sempre pur là dove
Ascender senza grazia è pensier vano.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Madrigal VII.

A sense of Beauty as true aim of skill
Was given me at my birth, the guiding light,
And mirror, of both arts I practise, ever:
Who otherwise believeth judges ill.
My eyes this only raises to that height,
At which, in painting, sculpture, I endeavour.
If men of hasty judgments, and unwise,
Degrade to sense that Beauty which can bear
To heaven minds sounder, urging, guiding, plainly,
Still, from the mortal to the heavenly, rise
Not eyes infirm, fixed staying only there,
Whence to ascend unhelped, who hopes, hopes vainly.

MICHELANGELO.

Madrigale VIII.

Gli occhi miei vaghi delle cose belle,
E l' alma insieme della sua salute,
Non hanno altra virtute
Ch' ascenda al ciel, che mirar tutte quelle.
Dalle più alte stelle
Discende uno splendore,
Che 'l desir tira a quelle;
E qui si chiama amore.
Nè altro ha gentil core,
Che l' innamori e arda, e che 'l consigl
Ch' un volto che ne gli occhi lor somigli.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Madrigal VIII.

My eyes which every beauteous thing admire,
My soul which ever seeks its good in Heaven,
Only this means find given,
By sight and thought of Beauty, to rise higher.
A falling light, a fire,
From highest stars above,
To Beauty draws desire,
And here men call it Love.
The gentle heart can prove
Nought else at once to fire, inspire, make wise,
But a fair countenance, with starlike eyes.

MICHELANGELO.

Madrigale XII.

Si come per levar, donna, si pone
In pietra alpestra e dura
Una viva figura,
Che là più crescie u' più la pietra scema;
Tal alcun' opre buone,
Per l' alma che pur trema,
Cela il superchio della propria carne
Co l' inculta sua cruda e dura scorza.
Tu pur dalle mie streme
Parti puo' sol levarne;
Ch' in me non è di me voler nè forza.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Madrigal XII.

Lady, as is, by chipping, chasing, brought
From mountain-marble rock
The form within the block,
Growing to life as faster fly the shivers;
So, if of goodness aught
Lie in my soul which quivers,
But my own flesh o'erlying that conceals
Beneath unwrought and rough and hard outside,
Thy hand alone delivers,
Wrought out, that good reveals;
Since will and force do not in me abide.

MICHELANGELO.

Madrigale XV.

Beati, voi che su nel ciel godete
Le lacrime che 'l mondo non ristora,
Favvi amor guerra ancora,
O pur per morte liberi ne siete?
La nostra eterna quiete,
Fuor d' ogni tempo, è priva
D' invidia amando, e d' angosciosi pianti.
Dunche a mal pro ch' i' viva
Convien, come vedete,
Per amare e servire in dolor tanti.
Se 'l cielo è degli amanti
Amico, e 'l mondo ingrato
Amando, a che son nato?
A viver molto? E questo mi spaventa:
Che 'l poco è troppo a chi ben serve e stenta.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Madrigal XV.

Ye Blest, who high in Heaven, live joyously,
For former tears on Earth rewarded ne'er,
  Does Love assail you there,
Or else are ye from that by death set free?
  "Eternal rest have we
  Beyond the Time-bounds, clear
Of jealousy, our love no anguish knows."
  That I with loss live here
  Ensues, as ye can see,
Loving and serving with so many woes.
  If Heaven such kindness shows
  To lovers, and the Earth
  Is stern, why had I birth?
For lengthened life? but that brings terror strong,
Who serveth well, and starves, finds short too long.

MICHELANGELO.

Madrigale XXIII.

Deh! dimmi, amor, se l' alma di costei
Fosse pietosa com' ha bell' il volto,
S' alcun saria sì stolto
Ch' a sè non si togliessi e dessi a lei?
Et io che più potrei
Servirla, amarla, se mi foss' amica;
Che, sendomi nemica,
L' amo più ch' allor far non doverrei?

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Madrigal XXIII.

Ah tell me Love, if, as her face is fair,
  Her soul were also kind,
  Is there a man so blind,
As not, self-robbed, to give himself to her?
But I, could I, e'en if she friendly were,
  More love and service show,
  Since while she is my foe,
More love, than then I ought, e'en now I bear?

MICHELANGELO.

Madrigale XXV.

Come può esser ch' io non sia più mio?
O dio, o dio, o dio!
Chi mi tolse a me stesso,
Ch' a me fusse più presso,
O più di me, che mi possa esser io?
O dio, o dio, o dio!
Come mi passa 'l core
Chi non par che mi tocchi!
Che cosa è questa, amore,
Ch' al core entra per gli occhi;
E s' avvien che trabocchi
Per poco spazio, dentro par che cresca?

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Madrigal XXV.

No longer mine! How can it be?
Ah me! Ah me!
Who took me from myself away,
Nearer to me than I to stay,
So am I less myself than he?
Ah me! Ah me!
And how can one, though touching not,
Yet reach the heart and pierce it so?
Is this then love? but love is what?
Which through the eyes to the heart can go,
And if awhile it overflow,
Seems still within to gather force.

MICHELANGELO.

Madrigale XXVII.

Nel mie 'rdente desio
Coste' pur mi trastulla,
Di fuor pietosa e nel cor aspra e fera.
Amor, non tel diss 'io,
Ch' e' no ne sare' nulla;
E che 'l suo perde, ch' in quel d' altri spera?
Or s' ella vuol ch' i' pera,
Mie colpa e danno s' ha prestarle fede;
Com' ha chi poco manca a chi più crede.

Questo è veramente um polizino. A voi mi rachomando.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Madrigal XXVII.

Whilst my desire burns hot,
She only toys with me,
Her heart untouched, although she kind looks uses.
I told thee, did I not,
Love, nought hence gained would be;
Who craves another's, he his own still loses.
But if my death she chooses,
The fault and loss are mine for trust bestowing;
Who hopes too much, to him is little owing.

This is quite a little letter. Believe me yours.

MICHELANGELO.

Madrigale XXIX.

Perc' all' alta mie speme è breve e corta,
Donna, tuo fè, se con san occhio il veggio,
Goderò, per non peggio,
Quante di fuor co' begli occhi prometti.
Chè dove è pietà morta,
Non è che gran bellezza non diletti:
E se contrari effetti
Agli occhi di mercè dentro a te sento,
La certezza non tento;
Ma prego, ove 'l gioire è men che 'ntero,
Sie dolce il dubbio a chi nuocer può 'l vero.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Madrigal XXIX.

Since, Lady, with my high-raised hopes thou'rt keeping
Scant faith and brief, if I but rightly see,
  I will, no worse to be,
Enjoy what outwards promise eyes so bright;
  Though love be dead or sleeping,
Great beauty fails not yet to bring delight;
  And if, quite opposite
To those kind eyes, I feel within thy mind,
  I seek not truth to find,
But pray, where joy must still be less than whole,
Sweet doubts may live, since truth might hurt my soul.

MICHELANGELO.

Madrigale XLII.

Credo, perc' ancor forse
Non sie la fiamma spenta
Nel freddo petto dall' età men verde,
L' arco subito torse
Amor, che si rammenta
Che 'n gentil cor ma' suo colpo non perde,
E la stagion rinverde
D' un bel volto: onde è peggio al sezzo strale
La ricaduta, che 'l mie primo male.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Madrigal XLII.

I think, may be, Love knew,
A fire lives yet in embers,
Though gone my spring, within my breast 'neath frost;
And hence he sudden drew
His bow, for he remembers,
His blow, in gentle heart, is never lost.
And that fair face almost
Brings back the green; at this last dart, worse still
Is my relapse, than was my first old ill.

MICHELANGELO.

Madrigale XLIV.

Occhi mie', siete certi
Che 'l tempo passa, e l' ora s' avicina
C' alle lacrime triste il passo serra.
Pietà vi tenga aperti,
Mentre la mie divina
Donna si degnia d' abitare in terra.
Se grazia il ciel diserra,
Com' a' beati suole;
Questo mie vivo sole
Se lassù torna, e partesi da noi
Che cosa arete qua da veder poi?

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Madrigal XLIV.

Do ye my eyes be sure
That time is flying, and the hour draws near
To shut you, gates through which my sorrow flows;
Still bent on Her endure,
My Lady high and dear,
While here on Earth to live no scorn she knows.
If God should Heaven unclose,
As still for Saints is done,
If she, my living sun,
Deserting us, above should go again,
What thing to look on here, will ye have then?

MICHELANGELO.

Madrigale XLIX.

Se l' alma è ver, dal suo corpo disciolta,
Che 'n alcun altro torni
A corti e brievi giorni,
Per vivere e morire un' altra volta;
La donna mia, di molta
Bellezza agli occhi mei,
Fie 'llor com' or nel suo tornar sì cruda?
Se mie ragion s' ascolta,
Attender la dovrei
Di grazia piena e di durezza nuda.
Credo, s' avien che chiuda
Gli occhi suo' begli, arà, come rinnuova,
Pietà del mie morir, se morte pruova.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Madrigal XLIX.

If it be true, the soul, its body flying,
Comes in another back,
To go the same short track,
Once more to live, to reach a second dying,
That Lady, whom descrying,
My eyes as Beauty view,
Will she, returned, as now, feel pity never?
On reasoning relying,
I know that mercy new
At heart, will her from former hardness sever;
And those bright eyes, whenever
Once closed, they shall regain a brilliant state,
Death felt, my dying will compassionate.

MICHELANGELO.

Madrigale LII. (Terza Lezione.)

Ogni cosa ch' i' veggio mi consiglia,
E priega, e forza ch' i' ti segua e ami;
Chè quel che non è te, non è 'l mie bene.
Amor, c' alberga sotto alle tuo ciglia,
Mi toglie ogni altra cura, e vuol ch' i' brami
Non avere una men di tante pene:
E' lacci e le catene
Son segni di prigion, c' al collo porto,
Onde dipende el mie misero stato:
Nè d' altro vivo, nè per altro nato;
E senza questo mal, saria già morto.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Madrigal LII. (Third version.)

Whate'er I see this counsel gives,
To love and follow thee constrains,
What is not thou is not my good,
And Love, who 'neath thy eyebrows lives,
Has every other care withstood,
But each of these so many pains
Bids stay. These chains
Are prison-badges worn by me,
On which I hang my state forlorn,
By nought else live, for nought else born;
I should have died, from this ill free.

MICHELANGELO.

Madrigale LIII.

Chi è quel che per forza a te mi mena,
Ohimè Ohimè Ohimè!
Legato e stretto, e son libero e sciolto?
Se tu 'ncateni altrui senza catena,
E senza mani o braccia m' hai raccolto,
Chi mi defenderà dal tuo bel volto?

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Madrigal LIII.

Who drags me thus? What force constrains
To come to you? Ah me! Ah me!
Tied fast! and I am loose and free?
If you chain folk, not using chains,
And seize without your hands or arms,
Who then can guard me 'gainst your charms?

MICHELANGELO.

Madrigale LVII. (Prima Lezione.)

Un uomo in una donna, anzi uno dio
Per la sua bocca parla;
Ond 'io per ascoltarla
Son fatto tal, che ma' più sarò mio.
I' credo ben', po' ch' io
A me da lei fu tolto,
Fuor di me stesso, aver di me pietate:
Sì sopra 'l van desio
Mi sprona il suo bel volto,
Ch' io veggio morte in ogn' altra beltate.
O donna, che passate
Per acqua e foco l' alma a' lieti giorni,
Deh fate ch' a me stesso più non torni!

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Madrigal LVII. (First version.)

A human soul speaks in a Lady;—no,
Hers is a voice divine,
Hence ne'er shall I be mine
Again, so changed, through hearing her, I grow;
And, as I surely know,
My spirit raised by hers
O'er self, myself I pity and despise.
Above desire I go,
So high her beauty spurs,
I see but death in other beauteous eyes.
Lady, who makest rise
The soul, through tears and fire, to Heaven,
Let no descent to self, to me, be given.

MICHELANGELO.

Madrigale LX.

Non mi posso tener nè voglio, amore,
Crescendo al tuo furore,
Ch' io non tel dica e iuri:
Quanto più inaspri e induri,
A più virtù l' alma consigli e sproni;
E se talor perdoni
Alla mia mort' e agli angosciosi pianti,
Come a colui che muore,
Dentro mi sento il core
Mancar, mancando i miei tormenti tanti.
Occhi lucenti e santi,
Mia poca grazia m è ben dolce e cara;
Ch' assai acquista chi perdendo impara.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Madrigal LX.

I cannot hold myself, nor, Love, would I,
Thy frenzy growing high,
From telling thee, nay swearing,
The harder thou, less sparing,
The more, my soul, thou biddest, spurrest on
To virtue; if anon,
By grace, thou stay'st the sobs that agonize,
I feel my heart then lie,
As his who hastes to die,
Sinking, as sink the pains, as sink the sighs.
O bright and holy eyes,
Scant favour, I hold sweet and dear, nor feign;
Who learns by losing, has by loss much gain.

MICHELANGELO.

Madrigale LXII.

Come portato ho già più tempo in seno
L' immagin, donna, del tuo volto impressa,
Or che morte s' appressa,
Con privilegio amor ne stampi l' alma;
Che del carcer terreno
Felice sie 'l dipor sua grieve salma.
Per procella o per calma
Con tal segno sicura
Sie come croce contro a' suo' avversari:
E donde in ciel ti rubò la natura
Ritorni, norma a gli spirti alti e chiari,
Ch' a rinnovar s' impari.
Lassin pel mondo un spirto in carne involto
Che, dopo te, gli resti il tuo bel volto.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Madrigal LXII.

As in my heart, O Lady, I have borne
Thus long, impressed, the image of thy face,
  Now death draws near apace,
Let Love so print my soul through favour high.
  The prison garments worn
On Earth, then loathed, I gladly shall lay by.
  Through tempest, through calm sky,
  With that mark armed, my soul,
As with the Cross, will safely meet each foe;
And to the sphere of Heaven whence Nature stole
Thee, carrying back that rule for Angels, go:
  Thus guided, they will know,
A spirit clothed in flesh, on Earth to send,
And after thee, thy beauty will not end.

MICHELANGELO.

Madrigale LXVII.

Quanto sare' men doglia il morir presto,
Che provar mille morte ad or ad ora,
Da ch', in cambio d' amarla, vuol ch' io mora!
Ahi che doglia infinita
Sente 'l mio cor, quando li torna a mente,
Che quella ch' io tant 'amo, amor non sente!
Come resterò 'n vita?
Anzi mi dice, per più doglia darmi,
Che se stessa non ama: e vero parmi.
Come posso sperar di me le dolga,
Se se stessa non ama? Ahi trista sorte!
Che fia pur ver, ch' io ne trarrò la morte?

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Madrigal LXVII.

How much less pain at once to die,
Than hourly thus a thousand death-pangs proving,
Since she has no reward but death for loving!
Ah! what unbounded pain,
My heart feels now, when reason surely teaches,
That her, whom I so love, love never reaches.
How then in life remain?
She tells me too, in greater grief to leave me,
Herself she loves not, nor would she deceive me;
How then to hope for sympathy from her,
Who loves not self? and I how hardly fated,
Should it prove true, that death my love awaited.

MICHELANGELO.

Madrigale LXXII.

Mestier non era all' alma tuo beltate
Legarme vinto con alcuna corda;
Che, se ben mi ricorda,
Sol d' uno sguardo fui prigione e preda:
C' alle gran doglie usate
Forz' è c' un debil cor subito ceda.
Ma chi fie ma' che 'l creda,
Preso da' tuo' begli occhi in brevi giorni,
Un legnio secco e arso verde torni?

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Madrigal LXXII.

Cords thy gracious beauty needed not
Fast to tie me, when I vanquished fell,
  Since, if I remember well,
One glance, spoil and prisoner, made of me;
  Only one,—a heart once hot
Needs must yield to old fires suddenly.
  Who can credit this could be?
That in time so short, by bright eyes ta'en,
Dried, half burnt, this trunk grows green again.

MICHELANGELO.

Madrigale LXXIII.

Mentre i begli occhi giri,
Donna, ver me da presso,
Tanto veggio me stesso
In lor, quanto ne' mie' te stessa miri.
Da gli anni, e da' martiri
Qual io son, quegli a me rendono in tutto,
E' mie' lor te più che lucente stella.
Ben par che 'l ciel s' adiri,
Che 'n sì begli occhi io mi veggia sì brutto,
E ne' miei brutti ti veggia sì bella.
Nè men crudele e fella
Dentro è ragion, ch' al core
Per lor mi passi, e quella
De' tuo' mi serri fuore.
Perchè 'l tuo gran valore
D' ogni men grado accrescie sua durezza:
Ch' amor vuol pari stato e giovanezza.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Madrigal LXXIII.

When, Lady, you turn so,
Bright eyes on me from nigh,
I can myself descry
In them, as mine your form to you must show.
But as I am through woe
And age, your eyes reflect my image rightly,
And mine to you a more than star-like splendour.
So Fortune's spite I know,
That in fair eyes I see myself unsightly,
Whilst mine, so far from fair, your beauty render.
Nor are our minds more tender
To me; whilst through the sense,
Into the heart you enter,
Your mind excludes me thence,
Since your high excellence
From contrast grows to more severity,
For love requires like youth, and like degree.

MICHELANGELO.

Madrigale LXXXIV.

Non è senza periglio
Il tuo volto divino
Dell' alma a chi è vicino,
Com' io, a morte, che la sento ogni ora:
Ond 'io m 'armo e consiglio
Per far da quel difesa, anzi ch' i' mora.
Ma tuo mercede, ancora
Che 'l mie fin sie da presso,
Non mi rende a me stesso;
Nè danno alcun da tal pietà mi scioglie:
Chè l' uso di molt' anni un dì non toglie.

Messer Luigi, voi e' avete spirito di poesia, vi prego che m' abreviate e rachonciate uno di questi madrigali, quale vi pare il manco tristo, perche 'l è a dare a un nostro amico.—Vostro Michelagniolo.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Madrigal LXXXIV.

Not from danger free,
Is thy face divine,
To a soul like mine,
To death,—I feel death hourly,—now so nigh.
Armed, I try to be,
And counselled 'gainst that beauty, ere I die.
Yet, with death close by,
Love will me no more
To myself restore,
Nor thoughts of suffered ills bring liberty;
The wont of years will not in one day flee.

Mr. Louis, I beg you, who have the spirit of poetry, to shorten and set to rights one of these madrigals, whichever seems to you the least bad, because I have to give one to a friend of ours.—Your Michael Angelo.

MICHELANGELO.

Madrigale XCIII.

Amor, se tu se' dio,
Non puo' ciò che tu vuoi?
Deh fa' per me, se puoi,
Quel ch' io farei per te, s 'amor fuss' io!
Sconviensi al gran desio
D' alta beltà la speme,
Vie più l' effetto, a chi è presso al morire.
Pon nel tuo grado il mio:
Dolce gli fie chi 'l preme?
Chè grazia per poc 'or, doppia 'l martire.
Ben ti voglio ancor dire:
Che sarie morte, s' a' miseri è dura,
A chi muor giunto all' alta sua ventura?

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Madrigal XCIII.

Thee, Love, men deify:
Canst thou not do thy will?
If able, that fulfil
For me, I'd do for thee, if Love were I.
Ill, hope of beauty high,
With longing passionate,
Much worse, the gain, suits me so near to dying.
Change lots, thy own laid by,—
On pains would sweetness wait?
Short favour is the pangs but multiplying.
If one, in misery lying,
This I would further say, find death too sad,
How much more he, whom high aims reached make glad.

MICHELANGELO.

Madrigale CII. (Imperfetto.)

Lezi, vezzi, carezze, or feste e perle;
Chi potria ma' vederle
Cogli atti suo' divin l' uman lavoro,
Ove l' argento e l' oro
Da le' ricieve o duplica suo luce?
Ogni gemma più luce
Dagli occhi suo' che da propia virtute
. . . . . .

MICHAEL ANGELO.

MADRIGAL CII. (Incomplete; last line added.)

Winsome petting, tender grace, then blaze
  Pearls and state; ah! who can gaze
On them? Heavenly mien,—all art can make!
  Where yon gold and silver take
Light from her, and borrowing reflect;
  From her eyes each precious stone
  Draws a brilliance not its own;
Must I love, yet, dazzled, hope reject?

MICHELANGELO.

Sonetto I.

Dal ciel discese, e col mortal suo, poi
Che visto ebbe l' inferno giusto e 'l pio,
Ritornò vivo a contemplare Dio,
Per dar di tutto il vero lume a noi:
Lucente stella, che co' raggi suoi
Fe chiaro, a torto, el nido ove naqqu 'io;
Nè sare' 'l premio tutto 'l mondo rio:
Tu sol, che la creasti, esser quel puoi.
Di Dante dico, che mal conosciute
Fur 'l opre suo da quel popolo ingrato,
Che solo a' iusti manca di salute.
Fuss' io pur lui! c' a tal fortuna nato,
Per l' aspro esilio suo, con la virtute,
Dare' del mondo il più felice stato.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Sonnet I.

ON DANTE ALIGHIERI.

He came from Heaven, and had, whilst mortal, sight,
Both of where just, where gracious, punishment
Is given, whence living back to God he went,
And brought to us, of all, the truth and light.
A shining star, who made my birth-nest bright,
With fame not earned, by rays upon it sent.
This world could give him no equivalent;
Thou God who mad'st him, only canst requite.
Dante, I mean, his works were ill and late
Known by that Herd, devoid of thanks and sense,
Which scants its favours only to the Best.
Yet would that I were He, mine too his fate;
For his hard exile, with his excellence,
I would exchange all here of happiest.

MICHELANGELO.

Sonetto III.

Signor, se vero è alcun proverbio antico,
Questo è ben quel, che Chi può, mai non vuole.
Tu hai creduto a favole e parole,
E premiato chi è del ver nimico.
Io sono, e fui già tuo buon servo antico;
A te son dato come i raggi al sole;
E del mio tempo non t' increscе o duole,
E men ti piaccio se più m' affatico.
Già sperai ascender per la tua altezza;
E 'l giusto peso, e la potente spada
Fassi al bisogno, e non la voce d' Ecco.
Ma 'l cielo è quel ch' ogni virtù disprezza
Locarla al mondo, se vuol ch' altri vada
A prender frutto d' un arbor ch' è secco.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Sonnet III.

TO POPE JULIUS THE SECOND.

My Lord, if any proverb truthful be,
'Tis this, "Who has the power has ne'er the will."
Thou giv'st belief to trifling tales of ill,
Rewarding men with truth at enmity.
I serve and have long served thee faithfully,
The place of rays, to thee as Sun, I fill;
But for my time thou carest nothing still,
And less I please, the more I toil for thee.
Through thy high grandeur once I hoped to rise,
But that, the sword, and balance even held,
Needed,—justice, not echo's lying cry.
Sure Heaven itself all merit must despise,
Placing it here, whilst here it is compelled
To seek for fruit upon an oak* grown dry.

* The Italian, arbor (tree), is supposed to be an allusion to the Pope's name, Giuliano della Rovere. Rovere is an oak.

MICHELANGELO.

Sonetto XIV.

Da che concetto ha l'arte intera e diva
La forma e gli atti d' alcun, poi di quello
D' umil materia un semplice modello
È 'l primo parto che da quel deriva.
Ma nel secondo poi di pietra viva
S' adempion le promesse del martello;
E sì rinasce tal concetto e bello,
Che ma' non è chi suo eterno prescriva.
Simil, di me model, nacqu' io da prima;
Di me model, per cosa più perfetta
Da voi rinascer poi, donna alta e degna.
Se 'l poco accresce, e 'l mio superchio lima
Vostra pietà; qual penitenzia aspetta
Mio fiero ardor, se mi gastiga e insegna?

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Sonnet XIV. (First version.)

When once some form, some face, in image glows
In one who has from God true sculptor's skill,
He thinks in clay, and as first birth of will,
A simple model from that image grows.
But in a second birth, his hammer knows
Its promise in live marble to fulfil,
The embodied thought grows fair and fairer still,
Reborn to life of which none sees the close.
So I as model was first born erewhile,
From clay to new and higher life to rise,
High noble Lady through thy influence.
But if thy kindness deigns from me to file
The excess, and raise the low, should it chastise
Desire, how great should be my penitence!

MICHELANGELO.

Sonetto XVII.

Com' esser, donna, può quel ch' alcun vede
Per lunga sperienza, che più dura
L' immagin viva in pietra alpestra e dura,
Che 'l suo fattor, che gli anni in cener riede?
La causa all' effetto inclina e cede
Onde dall' arte è vinta la natura.
Io 'l so, che 'l provo in la bella scultura;
Ch' all' opra il tempo e morte non tien fede.
Dunque posso ambo noi dar lunga vita
In qual sie modo, o di colore o sasso,
Di noi sembrando l' uno e l' altro volto:
Si che mill' anni dopo la partita
Quanto e voi bella fusti, e quant 'io lasso
Si veggia, e com' amarvi io non fui stolto.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Sonnet XVII.

Lady one sees, 'tis strange to say,
A form, made living, long abide
In marble from the mountain-side,
The artist soon return to clay.
So cause to the effect gives way,
And Art can Nature over-ride;
I know, and have in sculpture tried,
How with the work Death keeps no day.
Long life then I can give each one,
Copying the semblance borne
By us, in colour or in stone.
So when a thousand years have run,
How fair thou wert, and I how worn,
Yet wise to love thee, men will own.

MICHELANGELO.

Sonetto XXV.

Dimmi di grazia, amor, se gli occhi mei
Veggono 'l ver della beltà ch' aspiro,
O s' io l' ho dentro allor che, dov 'io miro,
Veggio più bello el viso di costei.
Tu 'l de' saper, po' che tu vien con lei
A torm' ogni mie pace, ond' io m' adiro;
Nè vorre' manco un minimo sospiro,
Nè men ardente foco chiederei.
La beltà che tu vedi è ben da quella;
Ma crescie poi ch' a miglior loco sale,
Se per gli occhi mortali all' alma corre.
Quivi si fa divina, onesta e bella,
Com' a sè simil vuol cosa immortale:
Questa, e non quella, a gli occhi tuo' precorre.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Sonnet XXV.

Love, of thy grace, oh tell me, does it flow,
That beauty, I so pant for, through my eyes
In truth, or comes it from what in me lies,
When her face seen still fairer seems to grow?
With her thou ever com'st, and thou must know.
Ye steal my peace, whence self-reproaches rise,
And yet I would not spare my least of sighs,
Nor would I ask that this hot fire burn low.
"Yes, came from her that beauty, thou see'st shine,
But flown through mortal eyes, the soul it fills,
And in that better place gains strength and light,
And there is purified, and made divine:
Things like itself, a thing immortal wills:
This image, and not that, floats in thy sight."

MICHELANGELO.

Sonetto XXVI.

Non men gran grazia, donna, che gran doglia
Ancide alcun, che 'l furto a morte mena,
Privo di speme e ghiacciato ogni vena,
Se vien subito scampo che 'l discioglia.
Simil se tua mercè, più che ma' soglia,
Nella miseria mie d' affanni piena
Con soverchia pietà mi rasserena,
Par, più che 'l pianger, la vita mi toglia.
Così n' avvien di novell' aspra e dolce;
Ne' lor contrari è morte in un momento,
Onde s' allarga o troppo stringe il core.
Tal tua beltà, ch' amore e 'l ciel qui folce,
Se mi vuol vivo, affreni il gran contento;
Ch' al don superchio debil virtù muore.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Sonnet XXVI.

Lady, not less great joy, than grief too great,
Can slay, as when his crimes some wretch constrain
To die, despairing, iced in every vein,
If sudden pardon comes to liberate.
So if thy grace, as wonted ne'er, my state,
So long in trouble tost, and full of pain,
By love unknown, change back to calm again,
Death's nearer than in woe, till then my fate;
So works still news which brings great grief or joy,
Their contrasts in one moment can destroy
The heart, too quick expanded, or grown less;
Let beauty then, which love and Heaven uplift,
If thou would'st have me live, my joy repress;
Since my weak powers bear not too great a gift.

MICHELANGELO.

Sonetto XXX.

Veggio co' bei vostri occhi un dolce lume,
Che co' miei ciechi già veder non posso;
Porto co' vostri piedi un pondo a dosso,
Che de' mie' zoppi non è già costume;
Volo con le vostr' ale senza piume;
Col vostr' ingegno al ciel sempre son mosso;
Dal vostr' arbitrio son pallido e rosso;
Freddo al sol, caldo alle più fredde brume.
Nel voler vostro è sol la voglia mia,
I mie' pensier nel vostro cor si fanno,
Nel vostro fiato son le mia parole
Come luna da sè sol par ch' io sia;
Che gli occhi nostri in ciel veder non sanno
Se non quel tanto che n' accende il sole.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Sonnet XXX.

Through thy clear eyes I see sweet light,
Which my dim sight would never meet,
And using thine, for my lame feet,
Bear loads beyond their wont or might;
Wingless, I take, on thy wings, flight,
By thy soul urged, to heaven retreat,
At thy command, 'midst ice, feel heat,
'Neath sun, the cold, grow red and white;
Thy willing ever forms my will,
In thy heart think I my thoughts still,
When words I speak, the breath is thine:
A moon alone, I seem to be,
In her, in heaven, we only see
The spaces, which sun-kindled shine.

MICHELANGELO.

Sonetto XXXII.

S' un casto amor, s' una pietà superna,
S' una fortuna infra dua amanti equale
S' un aspra sorte all' un dell' altro cale,
S' un spirto, s' un voler duo cor governa;
S' un anima in duo corpi è fatta eterna,
Ambo levando al cielo e con pari ale;
S' amor d' un colpo e d' un dorato strale
Le viscier di duo petti arda e discierna;
S' amar l' un l' altro, e nessun se medesmo,
D' un gusto e d' un diletto a tal mercede,
C' a un fin voglia l' uno e l' altro porre;
Se mille e mille non sarien centesmo
A tal nodo d' amore, a tanta fede;
E sol l' isdegno il può rompere e sciorre?

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Sonnet XXXII.

If a pure love, and feelings high,
And lots, are equal 'twixt two friends,
The other's sorrow each offends,
One mind, one will, the two hearts tie,
Two bodies, one soul ne'er to die,
On like wings raising, heavenward tends,
Love with one arrow burns and rends
The hearts which in two bosoms lie;
If both each other love, above
Themselves, of each the one dear thought,
To raise the other to one height;
If thousand such things are but nought
To this strong tie of faith and love;
One quarrel, can it disunite?

MICHELANGELO.

Sonetto XXXVII.

S' alcun legato è pur dal piacer molto,
Come da morte altrui tornare in vita;
Qual cosa è, che poi paghi tanta aita,
Che renda il debitor libero e sciolto?
E se pur fusse, ne sarebbe tolto
Il soprastar d' una mercè infinita
Al ben servito; onde sarie impedita
Dall' incontro servire a quella volto.
Dunque, per tener alta vostra grazia,
Donna, sopra 'l mio stato, in me sol bramo
Ingratitudin più che cortesia.
Chè dove l' un dell' altro al par si sazia,
Non mi sare' signor quel che tanto amo:
Chè in parità non cape signoria.

Mandato.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Sonnet XXXVII.

Bound by great service, if one be,
(Turned back from death to living, say,)
By what can he such aid repay,
What can such debtor loose and free?
Could that be done, the hope must he,
Of grace unending, cast away;
That loves with him who owes, to stay,
Turned to it, serving constantly:
Whence Lady to keep high thy grace
O'er my mean state, I rather show
Ingratitude than courtesy.
Did mutual favours equal flow,
'Twould thee, so loved, as queen displace;
'Twixt equals holds not sov'reignty.

Sent.

MICHELANGELO.

Sonetto XL. (Prima lezione.)

Non so s' è la desiata luce
Del suo primo fattor, che l' alma sente;
O se dalla memoria della gente
Alcun' altra beltà nel cor traluce;
O se fama o se sognio alcun prodduce
Agli occhi manifesto, al cor presente;
Di sè lasciando un non so che cocente,
Ch' è forse or quel ch' a pianger mi conduce;
Quel ch' i' sento e ch' i' cerco: e chi mi guidi
Meco non è; nè so ben veder dove
Trovar mel possa, e par c' altri mel mostri.
Questo, signior, m' avvien, po' ch' i' vi vidi;
C' un dolce amaro, un sì e no mi muove:
Certo saranno stati gli occhi vostri.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Sonnet XL. (First version.)

I know not, if it be the longed-for light
From light's first Maker, which my soul scarce sees,
Or other beauty, drawn from memories
Of folk, within my heart send rays not bright,
Or dreams make present something to my sight
And heart, or all I've heard of apt to please,
Something which leaves I know not what unease,
And may be that is which to sighs gives flight,
And what I feel and seek, but none to guide
My mind has, still, not knowing where, it tries
To find, although meseems one points the way;
This, Sovereign, came to me since you I eyed,
A sweet, a bitter, yes and no, have sway
O'er me; it surely must have been your eyes.

MICHELANGELO.

Sonetto XLI.

Colui che fece, e non di cosa alcuna,
Il tempo che non era anzi a nessuno,
Ne fe d' un due; e diè 'l sol alto all' uno;
All' altro, assai più presso, diè la luna.
Onde 'l caso, la sorte e la fortuna
In un momento nacquer di ciascuno;
Et a me consegnaro il tempo bruno,
Come a simil nel parto e nella cuna.
E come quel che contrafà se stesso,
Quando è ben notte più buio esser suole;
Ond' io di far ben mal m' affligo e lagno.
Pur mi consola assai l' esser concesso
Far giorno chiar mia oscura notte al sole
Ch' a voi fu dato al nascer per compagno.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Sonnet XLI.

He who made Time, and not from aught,
For it had been before for none,
Split it in parts, gave this the sun,
The nearer moon for the other wrought.
And that divided chances brought,
And lots and fortunes, to each one;
To me, as like, the shadows dun,
Which I since birth and cradle sought;
As one who self would imitate
And darker grows, as grows his night:
I grieve my bad in worse should end.
Yet this great joy is in my fate,
That thy sun makes my darkness light,
And I was born to be thy friend.

MICHELANGELO.

Sonetto XLIV.

O nott', o dolce tempo benchè nero,
(Con pace ogn' opra sempr' al fin assalta)
Ben ved' e ben intende chi t' esalta;
E chi t' onor', ha l' intellett' intero.
Tu mozzi e tronchi ogni stanco pensiero;
Che l' umid' ombra ogni quiet' appalta:
E dall' infima parte alla più alta
In sogno spesso porti ov' ire spero.
O ombra del morir, per cui si ferma
Ogni miseria l' alma al cor nemica,
Ultimo delli afflitti e buon rimedio;
Tu rendi sana nostra carn' inferma,
Rasciug' i pianti, e posi ogni fatica,
E furi a chi ben vive ogn' ir' e tedio.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Sonnet XLIV.

Sweet is night-tide, sweet thou, though black, O Night.
As day to thee, all purposed effort tends
To peace, and he sees clearly who commends
Thee, and who honours, thinks and speaks aright.
Thy humid shadows peace of all kinds invite,
In thee each weary thought of daylight ends;
And on thy wings in dream my soul ascends
Often from Earth to the longed-for heavenly height.
O Shadow of that death, through which the soul
Shuts out all ills and cares with the heart at strife,
Last remedy of sorrows and the best;
Thou renderest our sickening bodies whole,
Driest our tears, and giv'st the o'er-laboured rest,
And steal'st disgust and spleen from worthy life.

MICHELANGELO.

Sonetto LII.

Non vider gli occhi miei cosa mortale
Allor che ne' bei vostri intera pace
Trovai; ma dentro ov 'ogni mal dispiace
Chi d' amor l' alma a sè simil m' assale.
E se creata a Dio non fusse eguale,
Altro che 'l bel di fuor, ch' agli occhi piace,
Più non vorria; ma perch' è sì fallace,
Trascende nella forma universale.
Io dico, ch' a chi vive quel che muore
Quetar non può disir; nè par s' aspetti
L' eterno al tempo, ove altri cangia il pelo.
Voglia sfrenata el senso è, non amore,
Che l' alma uccide; e 'l nostro fa perfetti
Gli amici qui, ma più per morte in cielo.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Sonnet LII.

When perfect peace I found in thy bright eyes,
Not mortal were the things I saw, for these,
Within, where bad disgusts, can bring no ease;
But that, whence soul-like love to my soul flies.
Did God the soul to Him not equalize,
No beauty but outside, which still must please,
The soul would crave; but since that quickly flees,
She wills to beauty's type and fount to rise:
I say, in her who dies not, what must die,
Can quench not longing, nor the Eternal view
As equal Time, where change of form waits nigh.
Desire is will unbridled and not love,
And slays the soul; our love perfects, makes true
Friends here, yet more, through death, in Heaven above.

MICHELANGELO.

Sonetto LIII.

Non è sempre di colpa aspra e mortale
D' una immensa bellezza un fero ardore,
Se poi si lascia liquefatto il core,
Che 'n breve il pènetri un divino strale.
Amore isveglia e desta e impenna l' ale,
Nè l' alto vol prescrive al van furore;
Qual primo grado, ch' al suo creatore,
Di quel non sazia, l' alma ascende e sale
L' amor di quel ch' io parlo in alto aspira;
Donna, è dissimil troppo; e mal conviensi
Arder di quella al cor saggio e virile.
L' un tira al cielo, e l' altro in terra tira;
Nell' alma l' un, l' altro abita ne' sensi,
E l' arco tira a cose basse e vile.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Sonnet LIII.

It is not always grave or mortal sin,
To fiercely burn for beauty measureless,
If that but melt the heart to tenderness,
So that the heavenly rays swift entrance win.
Love giving wings, the soul will not within
Vain frenzy, roused, her lofty flight repress,
But thence, as from first step, to God progress,
Resting in nothing not to self akin.
Lady, the love I speak of heavenward flies,
Too different that is, which in beauty rests,
And ill becoming wise and manly breasts;
That aims at Heaven, on Earth this grovelling lies;
One swells the soul, whilst in the senses ends
The other, and the bow at base marks bends.

MICHELANGELO.

Sonetto LIV.

Veggio nel tuo bel viso, signior mio,
Quel che narrar mal puossi in questa vita:
L' anima, della carne ancor vestita,
Con esso è già piu volte asciesa a Dio.
E se 'l vulgo malvagio isciocco e rio
Di quel che sente, altrui segnia e addita;
Non è l' intensa voglia men gradita,
L' amor, la fede e l' onesto desio.
A quel pietoso fonte, onde siàn tutti,
S' assembra ogni beltà che qua si vede,
Più c' altra cosa, alle persone accorte;
Ne altro saggio abbiàn nè altri frutti
Del cielo in terra: e s' i' v 'amo con fede,
Trascendo a Dio, e fo dolce la morte.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Sonnet LIV.

On thy fair face, my Sovereign, intent,
I see what lies beyond this life, and ill
Finds words on earth; my soul, though flesh-clad still,
With that has ofttimes made to God ascent:
And if the herd, on sin and folly bent,
Ascribe to others sensual thoughts, which fill
Their hearts, not less are dear impassioned will,
And love and faith, with honest longing blent.
All beauteous things, which here on earth we see,
More than the rest, as is to wise men known,
Resemble Him, of us, of all, the Fount:
That sample and that fruit of Heaven alone,
Have we, and if I love thee faithfully,
I make death sweet in thought, to God I mount.

MICHELANGELO.

Sonetto LXVI.

Le favole del mondo m' hanno tolto
Il tempo dato a contemplare Iddio;
Nè sol le grazie suo poste in oblio,
Ma con lor, più che senza, a peccar volto.
Quel c' altri saggio, me fa cieco e stolto,
E tardi a riconoscer l' error mio.
Scema la speme, e pur crescie 'l desio
Che da te sie dal proprio amor disciolto.
Ammezzami la strada c' al ciel sale,
Signior mie caro, e a quel mezzo solo
Salir m' è di bisognio la tuo 'ita.
Mettimi in odio quante 'l mondo vale,
E quante suo bellezze onoro e colo,
C' anzi morte caparri eterna vita.

Messer Giorgio, io vi mando dua sonetti; e benchè sieno cosa sciocca, il fo perchè veggiate dove io tengo i mie' pensieri: e quando arete ottantuno anni, come ò io, mi crederete. Pregovi gli diate a messer Giovan Francesco Fattucci, che me ne à chiesti.—Vostro Michelagniolo Buonarroti in Roma.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Sonnet LXVI.

Earth's work and toys have occupied, amused,
Years granted me on God to meditate,
Not only I forgot him in that state,
But e'en his favours I for sinning used.
And what made others wise in me infused
But folly, making me perceive it late;
Now, though my wishes grow, my hopes abate,
That from self-love I may by Thee be loosed.
But shorten Thou, dear Lord, the road from Earth
To Heaven, advancing me by grace half-way;
By Thy aid only can I so far rise.
Grant me to spurn all here of greatest worth,
Those beauties, that I honour most and prize;
Ere death, give earnest of eternal day.

Mr. George, I send you two sonnets; and although they are silly things, I send them that you may see what I am thinking of: and when you are eighty-one years old, as I am, you will believe in what I say. I beg you will give them to Mr. John Francis Fattucci, who asked me for some.—Your Michael Angelo Buonarroti in Rome.

MICHELANGELO.

Sonetto LXVII.

Non è più bassa o vil cosa terrena
Che quel che, senza te, mi sento e sono;
Ond' all' alto desir chiede perdono
La debile mie propia e stanca lena.
Deh porgi, Signor mio, quella catena
Che seco annoda ogni celeste dono:
La fede dico, a che mi stringo e sprono;
Nè, mie colpa, n' ho grazia intiera e piena.
Tanto mi fie maggior quant' è più raro
Il don de' doni; e maggior fia, se senza,
Pace e contento il mondo in sè non have.
Po' che non fusti del tuo sangue avaro,
Che sarà di tal don la tua clemenza,
Se 'l ciel non s' apre a noi con altra chiave?

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Sonnet LXVII.

Earth has not aught more worthless, or more base,
Than that I feel and am, when thou'rt not by;
Short-comings pardon, ye far hopes and high,
To breath too weak, and feet that weary pace;
And in my hand that chain do Thou Lord place,
To which strong links all heavenly graces tie.
I speak of faith, at which I strain and try,
Having, (my fault), not full and whole that grace;
And 'twill be dearer, as it is more rare,
That gift of gifts, and greater, as if faith fail,
Peace or content in this world cannot be:
And as O Lord! thy blood Thou didst not spare,
What would that gracious gift alone avail,
If faith be still of Heaven the only key?

MICHELANGELO.

Sonetto LXXII.

Deh fammiti vedere in ogni loco!
Se da mortal bellezza arder mi sento,
A presso al tuo mi sarà foco ispento,
E io nel tuo sarò, com' ero, in foco.
Signor mie caro, i' te sol chiamo e 'nvoco
Contra l' inutil mie cieco tormento:
Tu sol puo' rinnovarmi fuora e drento
Le voglie, e 'l senno, e 'l valor lento e poco.
Tu desti al tempo ancor quest' alma diva,
E 'n questa spoglia ancor fragil' e stanca
L' incarcerasti, e con fiero destino.
Che poss' io altro, che così non viva?
Ogni ben senza te, Signor, mi manca.
Il cangiar sorte è sol poter divino.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Sonnet LXXII.

Where'er I am, O make me see Thy face;
If I, from mortal beauty, feel a glow,
That fire by Thine o'erpowered and quenched will go;
I still shall burn, Thine taking that fire's place.
Dear Lord, to Thee alone I pray for grace,
And help, against my blind and idle woe,
For Thou canst cause me new throughout to grow,
My will, my mind, my powers relaxed and base;
E'en in this time-bound world, a soul divine
Thou gav'st, imprisoned in a body frail
And weary, 'neath hard laws and rigid fate.
How otherwise to change the life now mine?
Without Thy aid, O Lord, all good must fail,
Thy power alone can change man's heart and state.

MICHELANGELO

Sonetto LXXV.

Vorrei voler, Signior, quel ch' io non voglio:
Tra 'l foco e 'l cor di iaccia un vel s' asconde,
Che 'l foco ammorza; onde non corrisponde
La penna all' opre, e fa bugiardo 'l foglio.
I' t' amo con la lingua, e poi mi doglio;
Ch' amor non giungie al cor, nè so ben onde
Apra l' uscio alla grazia, che s' infonde
Nel cor, che scacci ogni spietato orgoglio.
Squarcia 'l vel tu, Signior, rompi quel muro
Che con la suo durezza ne ritarda
Il sol della tuo luce al mondo spenta.
Manda 'l preditto lume a noi venturo
Alla tuo bella sposa, acciò ch' io arda
E te senz' alcun dubbio il cor sol senta.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Sonnet LXXV.

I will it not; Lord I would will to will,
But 'twixt Thy fire, and my cold heart, has place
A hidden screen of ice, whence lies deface
The page, my deeds and pen agreeing ill.
With tongue I love Thee, then I grieve that still
Love reaches not my heart, nor for Thy grace
Know I to ope a door, that it may chase
Proud passion thence, my heart, made humble, fill.
Rend Thou that screen, break down the solid wall,
Through which the rays from Thee refuse to flow,
To bring to this dark world Thy light and heat.
Send now that light, foredoomed to come to all,
To thy fair spouse, the soul, my heart make glow,
Feeling Thee there with certainty complete.

MICHELANGELO.

Sonetto LXXVII.

Mentre m' attrista e duol, parte m' è caro
Il pensier del passato, s' al cor riede
Mie miserie e peccati, e ragion chiede
Del tempo perso, onde non è riparo.
Caro m' è sol, perch' anzi morte imparo
Quant' ogni uman diletto ha corta fede;
Tristo m' è, ch' a trovar grazia e mercede
Nell 'ultim 'ora è pur dubbioso e raro.
Che, benchè alle promesse tue s' attenda,
Creder, Signore, è troppo grande ardire
Ch' ogni gran tardità pietà perdoni.
Ma pur par dal tuo sangue si comprenda
Quanto infinito fu 'l tuo gran martire,
Senza misura sien tuo 'cari doni.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Sonnet LXXVII.

Whilst giving grief and pain, in part the thought
Of my past life is dear, when it brings to mind
Sins and short-comings, with a charge combined
Of time irreparably spent in nought.
'Tis dear, because I am ere death so taught,
How trust in earthly joys is brief and blind;
Sad, since I know how hard it is to find
Mercy through grace when at the last hour sought.
For Lord it were presumptuous hardihood,
Not faith in promises, to claim a right
To gracious pardon for all tardiness.
And yet I seem to see in Thy shed blood,
That as that sacrifice was infinite,
So too thy dearest gifts are measureless.

MICHELANGELO.

Stanze.

Nuovo piacere e di magiore stima,
Veder l' ardite capre sopr' un sasso
Montar, pasciendo or questa or quella cima;
E 'l mastro lor, con aspre note, al basso,
Sfogare el cor colla suo roza rima,
Sonando or fermo, e or con lento passo;
E la suo vaga, che ha 'l cor di ferro,
Star co' porci, in contegnio, sott' un cierro:

Quant' è veder 'n un eminente loco
E di pagli' e di terra el loro ospizio.
Chi ingombra 'l desco, e chi fa fora 'l foco,
Sott' a quel faggio ch' è più lor propizio:
Chi ingrassa e gratta 'l porco, e prende gioco;
Chi doma 'l ciuco col basto primizio:
E 'l vecchio gode e fa poche parole,
Fuor dell' uscio a sedere, e stassi al sole.

MICHAEL ANGELO.

Stanzas.

'Tis choicest joy, and new, to see
Up the rocks goats venturous go,
Browse tops of this and then yon tree;
Their owner, with rude rhymes, below
Breathes out his heart in melody;
His pipe-tones low, then firmer flow:
Modest stands his steel-hearted maid,
Watching the hogs in yon oak-glade:

Joy too, upon the knoll to spy
The thatched mud-cottage where they bide,
One sets the table, one blows high
Fire 'neath that beech, their friend outside;
One, scratching, pets the pig hard by;
One breaks an ass with pad first tried:
And by the door, that aged one,
Who speaks but little, basks in sun.

Note.—These stanzas are from an incomplete poem on country joys and town vices, consisting chiefly of quaint little pictures.

VITTORIA COLONNA.

Parte Prima Sonetto IX.

Mentre io quì vissi in voi, lume beato,
E meco voi, vostra mercede, unita
Teneste l' alma, era la nostra vita
Morta in noi stessi e viva nell' amato.
Poichè per l' alto e divin vostro stato
Non son più a tanto ben qua giù gradita,
Non manchi al cor fedel la vostra aita
Contro il mondo vèr noi nemico armato.
Sgombri le spesse nebbie d' ogn' intorno
Sì ch' io provi a volar spedite l' ali
Nel già preso da voi destro sentiero.
Vostro onor fia, ch' io chiuda ai piacer frali
Gli occhi in questo mortal fallace giorno,
Per aprirgli nell' altro eterno e vero.

VITTORIA COLONNA.

Sonnet IX.

TO HER DECEASED HUSBAND.

Once I lived here in you, my now blest Light,
With your soul joined to mine, for you were kind,
Each, to the dearer one, had life resigned,
And dead to self, there only lived aright.
Now that, you being in that heavenly height,
I am no longer graced such joy to find,
Your aid deny not to a faithful mind,
Against the World, which arms with us to fight.
Clear the thick mists, which all around me lie,
That I may prove at flying freer wings,
On your already travelled heavenward way.
The honour yours, if here, midst lying things,
I shut my eyes to joys which soon pass by,
To ope them there to true eternal day.

VITTORIA COLONNA.

Parte Prima. Sonetto LXXV.

Qui fece il mio bel sole a noi ritorno
Di regie spoglie carco e ricche prede:
Ahi con quanto dolor l' occhio rivede
Quei lochi ov' ei mi fea già chiaro il giorno!
Di palme e lauro cinto era d' intorno,
D' onor, di gloria, sua sola mercede:
Ben potean far del grido sparso fede
L' ardito volto, il parlar saggio adorno.
Vinto da' prieghi miei poi ne mostrava
Le sue belle ferite, e 'l tempo e 'l modo
Delle vittorie sue tante e sì chiare.
Quanta pena or mi dà, gioia mi dava!
E in questo e in quel pensier piangendo godo
Tra poche dolci e assai lagrime amare.

VITTORIA COLONNA.

Sonnet LXXV.

HER HUSBAND'S RETURN HOME.

My own fair Sun to us once homeward here,
Loaded with regal spoils, and rich prey, came;
Ah with what grief this spot, though still the same,
I see again, where he made day more clear!
The palms and laurels circled him, and near
Glory and honour went, his only aim,
And well accredited his rumoured fame,
Wise noble speech, and face which knew no fear.
By my entreaties vanquished he showed then
His glorious wounds, and in what way he fought,
Gaining those famous victories, and when.
Great as the joy he gave, he now gives woe,
I weep at that, I weep too at this thought,
'Midst few sweet tears, yet many bitter, flow.

VITTORIA COLONNA.

Rime Sacre. Sonetto VII.

Qual digiuno augellin, che vede ed ode
Batter l' ali alla madre intorno, quando
Gli reca il nutrimento, ond' egli, amando
Il cibo e quella, si rallegra e gode,
E dentro al nido suo si strugge e rode
Per desio di seguirla anch' ei volando,
E la ringrazia in tal modo cantando
Che par ch' oltre 'l poter la lingua snode;
Tal io qualor il caldo raggio e vivo
Del divin sole, onde nutrisco il core,
Più dell' usato lucido lampeggia,
Muovo la penna spinta dall' amore
Interno; e senza ch' io stessa m' avveggia
Di quel ch' io dico, le sue lodi scrivo.

VITTORIA COLONNA.

Sonnet VII.

The hungry nestling, hearing beat of wing
Around, looks forth upon his mother, who
Is bringing food, which loving, and Her too,
The bringer, joy begins he uttering,
Within the nest is trembling, fluttering,
Would eager join her flight, if he but flew;
With tongue unloosed, chirps thrills of music new,
Thanks clearer than his wonted muttering.
So I, what time the warm and living ray,
My heart's true food, from Him the Sun above,
Plays round me, glittering with unwonted light,
My pen move quickly, urged by inward love,
And then without perceiving what I say,
To Him, glad songs of thanks and praise, I write.

VITTORIA COLONNA.

Rime Sacre. Sonetto XL.

Vorrei 'l orecchia aver qui chiusa e sorda
Per udir coi pensier più fermi e intenti
L' alte angeliche voci e i dolci accenti,
Che vera pace in vero amor concorda.
Spira un aer vital tra corda e corda
Divino e puro in quei vivi stromenti,
E sì move ad un fin i lor concenti
Che l' eterna armonia mai non discorda.
Amor alza le voci, amor le abbassa,
Ordina e batte ugual l' ampia misura,
Che non mai fuor del segno in van percuote.
Sempre è più dolce il suon, sebbene ei passa
Per le mutanze in più diverse note;
Chè chi compone il canto ivi n' ha cura.

VITTORIA COLONNA.

Sonnet XL.

I would my ears now dull and closed might be,
So should I hear, with thoughts more firmly bent,
Clear Angel voices, and sweet accents blent
By true peace in true love, in harmony:
A vital air breathes, pure and heavenly,
'Twixt cord and cord, in each live instrument;
To one sweet whole, the tones move confluent,
A song eternal, aye from discord free.
Love raises now the voices, Love then lowers,
And guides the mighty song, and duly shows
The pauses, so no note is struck in vain:
The harmony through mounting changes flows,
From air to air, from sweet to sweeter, soars,
Guided by Him, who first inspired the strain.

VITTORIA COLONNA.

Rime Sacre. Sonetto XLVI.

Quando il turbato mar s' alza, e circonda
Con impeto e furor ben fermo scoglio;
Se saldo il trova, il procelloso orgoglio
Si frange, e cade in sè medesma l' onda.
Tal io, s' incontra me vien la profonda
Acqua mondana irata, come soglio,
Levo al ciel gli occhi; e tanto più la spoglio
Del suo vigor quanto più forte abbonda.
E se talor il vento del desio
Ritenta nuova guerra, io corro al lido,
E d' un laccio d' amor con fede attorto
Lego il mio legno a quella, in cui mi fido,
Viva pietra Gesù; si che quand' io
Voglio, posso ad ognor ritrarmi in porto.

VITTORIA COLONNA.

Sonnet XLVI.

If the sea, rising angrily, surround,
With furious blows, some rock to earth well tied,
And find it motionless, the gusty pride
Breaking leaps back in foam with roaring sound.
So too, if from this world's abyss profound,
In angry masses, come 'gainst me the tide,
Looking, as wonted, up, I fixed abide,
And rob its strength, howe'er the force abound.
But if desire anon should send a wind,
Again to try new war, I shoreward fly,
And with a rope of love with faith well twined,
To that, in which I trust, my vessel tie,
The live rock Jesus, whence the means I find,
Withdrawn at will to port, in peace to lie.

VITTORIA COLONNA.

Rime Sacre. Sonetto CLXXXVI.

Due modi abbiam da veder l' alte e care
Grazie del ciel; l' uno è guardando spesso
Le sacre carte, ov' è quel lume espresso
Che all' occhio vivo sì lucente appare;
L' altro è, alzando del cor le luci chiare
Al libro della croce, ov' egli stesso
Si mostra a noi sì vivo e sì dappresso,
Che l' alma allor non può per l' occhio errare.
Con quella scorta ella sen va sospesa
Sì, che se giunge al disiato fine,
Passa per lungo e dubbioso sentiero.
Ma con questa sovente da divine
Luci illustrata, e di bel foco accesa,
Corre certa e veloce al segno vero.

VITTORIA COLONNA.

Sonnet CLXXXVI.

Two ways have we, the mercies high and dear
Of God, to find: the one by frequent sight
And searching of His holy book aright;
The outward eye sees truth and radiance here.
The other is, the inward vision clear
To raise upon the Cross, set opposite,
His other book; the soul no erring light
Can dread, Him seeing living and so near.
With that first guide, she stumbling steps and slow,
And if she reach the end of her desire,
Must travel by a long and doubtful way.
But when this guides her, kindled by His fire,
And often lighted by a heavenly ray,
She, sure and swiftly, to the mark will go.

VITTORIA COLONNA.

Rime Inedite. Sonetto III.

Com' il calor del gran pianeta ardente
Dissolve il ghiaccio, ovver borea turbato
Fuga le nubi, così 'l sole amato
Nessun basso pensier nel cor consente.
Vien donno nel suo albergo, e la mia mente
De' suoi nimici sgombra; onde illustrato
Mio spirto allor dal suo lume beato
L' altre cure men degne ha in tutto spente.
Or se ciò è in terra, che fia dunque poi
Che sarà tolto il grave mortal velo,
Sì che tanto splendor non mi contenda?
Temo sol che sì lieta i raggi suoi
Vedrò, ch' altro maggior lume nel cielo
Non mi fia noto, n' altro ardor m' accenda.

VITTORIA COLONNA.

Sonnet III.

As 'neath the king of planets' burning rays
The ice dissolves, or, as the strong north wind
Chases the clouds, so entering in my mind,
My own loved Sun will suffer nothing base.
He comes as master home, and from his face,
His foes fly back, and only thoughts refined
By his blest light with him in union bind
My heart, where no less worthy cares find place.
How shall I feel, on Earth thus feeling, when
Death shall this heavy mortal veil remove,
Which intercepts the splendid light in part?
I only fear that I so gladly then
Shall see his rays, that filled with them, my heart
Will know no greater light, no higher love.

VITTORIA COLONNA.

Rime Sacre Inedite. Sonetto II.

Quasi gemma del ciel, l' alto signore
Per dono sopra gli altri eterno e intero
Ne diè la libertade; e un cor sincero,
Sol con renderla a lui, può fargli onore.
Il proprio nostro arbitrio è proprio errore;
Onde l' animo umil, sicuro e altero
Oprando, nel voler libero e vero
Di Dio richiude il suo, per fido amore.
Riceve il miser cieco alta mercede,
Quando un sano lo guida e gliel dimostra,
Che l' arbitrio e la man lieto gli porge.
E noi più ciechi l' empia voglia nostra
Raggira in questo error; nè si concede
Al sempiterno sol che al vero scorge.

VITTORIA COLONNA.

Sonnet II.

Freedom, a gem from Heaven, our Lord bestows,
A gift beyond all others to endure,
Which giving back, the true heart keeps secure,
And only thus, to pay Him honour knows.
Our own free will our proper error grows,
And humble minds, by lofty ways and sure,
Within God's will, the truly free and pure,
Their own free will, with faith and love, inclose.
The blind receives a favour high, if one
Who sees guide him, and hence with grateful mind
He offers will and hand, unchecked by pride.
But our unholy will whirls us, more blind,
In these our errors, round, nor lets that Sun,
Who liveth ever, to the true path guide.

RINALDO D' AQUINO.

Giammai non mi conforto,
Nè mi voglio allegrare:
Le navi sono al porto,
E vogliono collare.
Vassene la più gente
In terra d' oltremare,
Ed io, oimè lassa dolente!
Como degg' io fare?

Vassene in altra contrata,
E nol mi manda a dire,
Ed io rimango ingannata.
Tanti son li sospire,
Che mi fanno gran guerra,
La notte con la dia;
Nè in cielo nè in terra
Non mi pare ch' io sia.

RINALDO D' AQUINO.

LAMENT OF THE CRUSADER'S LOVER.

(Written about 1177.)

Henceforth no peace, no more
Shall gladness reach my heart;
The ships lie near the shore,
Will soon hoist sails to start.
Most folk make haste to go
To lands beyond the sea;
I know not what to do;
Ah me! ah wretched me!

Far, far, he goes away,
He sent not word, and I,
Deceived, behind must stay;
Hence now so oft I sigh,
And grief makes war so dread
By night and day on me,
Neither on earth, nor fled
To heaven, I seem to be.

Santus Santus Deo,
Che me la vergine venisti,
Tu salva e guarda l' amor meo,
Po' che da me lo dipartisti.
Oi alta potestate,
Temuta e dottata,
Il dolze mio amore
Ti sia raccomandata!

La croce salva la gente,
E me fa disviare;
La croce mi fa dolente,
E non mi val Deo pregare.
Oimè croce pellegrina,
Perchè m' hai così, distrutta?
Oimè lassa tapina!
Ch' io ardo e incendo tutta.

Lo imperador con pace
Tutto il mondo mantiene,
E a me guerra face,
Che m' ha tolta la mia spene.

O God of holiness,
O Holy Virgin-born,
My Love preserve, and bless,
Whom Thou from me hast torn.
Great Power in Heaven above,
O Lord of fear and prayer,
Keep Him, my own sweet Love,
Entrusted to Thy care.

Of others the relief,
The Cross drives me astray,
The Cross to me brings grief,
Nor aught avails to pray.
Ah why undo me so,
Oh Cross of cruelty?
For now throughout I glow,
And burn,—Ah wretched me!

Though peace the Emperor,
O'er all the world, makes reign,
On me he wages war,
Since he my Hope has ta'en.

Oi alta potestate
Temuta e dottata,
Lo meo dolze amore
Vi sia raccomandata.

Quanda la croce pigliao,
Cierto no lo mi pensai,
Quelli che tanto m' amao,
Ed io lui tanto amai;
Ch' io ne fui battuta,
E messa in prigionia,
Ed in celato tenuta,
Per la vita mia.

Le navi sono alle celle;
In buon ora possan andare,
E lo mio amor con elle,
E la gente che v' ha andare.
Padre criatore,
A santo porto le conduce,
Che vanno a servidore
De la tua santa croce.

Great Power in Heaven above,
O Lord of fear and prayer,
Keep Him, my own sweet Love,
Entrusted to Thy care.

I little thought, when He
Took up the Cross, yon time,
He who so much loved me,
And I so much loved Him,
That in that Cross I found
My fate, in prison strong,
And in concealment, bound,
To lie, my whole life long.

The ships lie at the Quays,
May favouring breezes blow,
For Him, my Love, and these
Who thither have to go.
Creator, Father dear,
Help them, kept free from loss,
To holy ports to steer;
They serve Thy holy Cross.

Però ti prego Dolcetto,
Che sai la pena mia,
Che me ne facci un sonetto,
E mandilo in Soria:
Ch' io non posso abentare
Notte nè dia:
In terra d' oltremare,
Ita è la vita mia.

Dolcetto, thee I pray,
Thou know'st my grief O Friend!
Write verses, which I may
To Him in Syria send,
Saying that night and day
My heart is tossed in strife,
To peace knows not the way;
O'er sea is gone my Life.

MILTON.

Giovane piano e semplicetto amante,
Poi che fuggir me stesso in dubbio sono,
Madonna a voi del mio cuor l' umil dono
Farò divoto; io certo a prove tante
L' ebbi fedele, intrepido, costante,
Di pensieri leggiadro, accorto, e buono;
Quando rugge il gran mondo e scocca il tuono,
S' arma di sè, e d' intero diamante,
Tanto del forse e d' invidia sicuro,
Di timori, e speranze al popol use
Quanto d' ingegno, e d' alto valor vago,
E di cetra sonora, e delle muse:
Sol troverete in tal parte 'men duro,
Ove Amor mise l' insanabil ago.

MILTON.

A youth yet simple and to loving new,
Since that to fly myself I half incline,
Lady I will my heart to you resign,
For it is yours. I'm sure, by proofs not few,
I found it faithful, fearing nought, and true,
With graceful thoughts, and wise, and good, whilst mine;
Did the world's thunders roar, its lightnings shine,
Full armour from within of steel it drew,
And hopes and fears companions of the base,
With wavering thoughts, and envy, scorned as much,
As it loved mind and every noble thing,
The Muses, and the tuneful harp to touch:
Only in it less hard you'll find one place,
Which Love has pierced with never-healing sting.

PETRARCA.

Canzone XXIX.

Non è questo 'l terren ch' i' toccai pria?
Non è questo 'l mio nido,
Ove nudrito fui sì dolcemente?
Non è questa la patria in ch' io mi fido,
Madre benigna e pia,
Che copre l' uno, e l' altro mio parente?
Per Dio, questo la mente
Talor vi mova; e con pietà guardate
Le lagrime del popol doloroso,
Che sol da voi riposo
Dopo Dio spera: e, pur che voi mostriate
Segno alcun di pietate,
Virtù contra furore
Prenderà l' arme; e fia 'l combatter corto:
Che l' antico valore
Negl' Italici cor non è ancor morto.

PETRARCH.

Canzone XXIX.

Is not then this the ground that I touched first?
This not my own birth-nest,
Where I, yon time, so lovingly was nursed?
My native land, first known, and trusted best,
Kind mother-earth, where lie
In shelter, one and my other parent, sleeping?
Princes! would God this land
At last might move you; that with pitying eye
Ye might regard this People so long weeping,
Which, next to God's right hand,
Tranquillity must owe
To you alone; and if ye now but know
Favour to signify,
True manhood will make bold
To arm 'gainst rage; that fight will soon be sped;
For the valour of old
In the Italian heart is not yet dead.

Note.—This is one stanza from the famous Canzone, "Italia mia, benche' parlar sia indarno," addressed to the Princes of Italy.

TO VARUNA.

(Max Müller's Sanskrit Literature.)

Not yet, not yet, the house of clay
To enter, Varuna, I pray;
Have mercy Almighty, mercy.

Though trembling, guideless, still I go,
As fly the clouds when tempests blow,
Have mercy Almighty, mercy.

Oh God of strength and light, if weak,
I, the wrong shore, still erring, seek,
Have mercy Almighty, mercy.

Blessings, like waters, round me spread,
Thirsting I bow, in prayer, my head,
Have mercy Almighty, mercy.

TRANSLATION FROM SPIEGEL 'YAS'NA.'

Ahura hear my prayer,
Mazda the Right declare.

Thy Servant's mind, oh Mazda, raise,
Help me, teach me,
For I love thee,
Thy praise to sing, with worthy praise;
With me, let pure thoughts find their home,
Till He, the pure, S'raosha,* come.

Ahura hear my prayer,
Mazda the Right declare.

The Beings, holy, pure, who made?
Bade the bright sun,
His course to run,
And for the stars sure pathway laid?

* As to S'raosha, see Spiegel 'Erânische Alterthumskunde,' vol. ii. p. 87.

Who made the moon to wane and grow,
The seas to roll,—who else but Thou?

Ahura hear my prayer,
Mazda the Right declare.

The Earth, the stars by nought sustained,
Thou upholdest,
Thou enfoldest,
So fall they not, by Thee maintained.
Who makes the winds, the clouds fly swift?
Is life to man Thy gracious gift?

Ahura hear my prayer,
Mazda the Right declare.

Who, loving, Light and darkness, sends,
Sleep and waking,
And the breaking
Of day, when red with azure blends?
Who, loving, sends mid-day and night,
Who in Thy law inspires delight?

Ahura hear my prayer,
Mazda the Right declare.

Thy holy laws and pure, shall they,
In that yon life,
When the long strife
'Twixt good and bad in fiercest fray
Shall end, prevail? The Hosts I see
Of Deathless,—whose the victory?

FAREWELL.

Italia! my voice but harshly renders
Thy tones, scarce knows the way,
Thy poets' thoughts to say.
What wonder! if men failed,
Long dazzled by the splendours,
To know thy light had paled?

I saw thee in thy night, and deemed thee dead;
But as I know thee queenly, and twice crowned,
  And how thou wert, of old,
Mother, to us, of culture manifold,
  I trod the sacred ground
With reverence, whilst a pageant of the Past
Swept by me,—Roman citizens, the dread
Of Kings, the awful Emperors, long decay,
Next fairer life, too fugitive, and last,
I saw thy face in lifeless beauty gleaming,
White marble with the starlight on it streaming.
  And now, I live to see
On that wan face, the flushing of the day,
Italian beauty, Roman majesty,
Blend there, as thou, from Rome, see'st union,
With strength, and freedom to live nobly, won,
And ancient valour roused, which sleeping lay,
Not dead. Who thought such darkness could give place
To dawn? Who in such death new life could trace?

PART THE SECOND.

SONNETS, AND OTHER POEMS.

SONNETS, AND OTHER POEMS.

DEDICATORY.

He who, his country left in youthful prime,
Has lived in exile long, for home will yearn,
And when approaches his long-wished return,
He eager homeward writes from that far clime,
But doubts, if those unseen since yon glad time,
Their Friend will recognize, grown grey and stern,
Alternate fears and hopes within him burn;
So, Mother, I send you this book of rhyme.
Not such my life as you too fond believed,
With wealth, and fame, and love, yet meek and pure,
For I have much attempted, nought achieved;
Still here perhaps your teachings you will trace,
Some breath of sweetness that may yet endure,
And know 'neath age and toil your boy's own face.

THE COAST FROM ST. ALBAN'S.

The Sea is glancing in the sun,
And laughing, dancing, wreathed in white,
With his glad mate the Air;
Was that far thunder or a gun
From Portland, distant on our right,
Some war-ship playing there?
White Ness, yon cape, so like a bank
Of clouds, bright white amidst the blue,
These hills abruptly ends:
And thence the coast, in a serried rank
Of headlands, varied in form and hue,
Here to St. Alban's trends;
'Twixt them fair bays, now hidden, lie,
Fantastic rocks each other greet,
Rare forms and colours blend
To beauties dear or grand and high,
Which, as in poems great and sweet,
Change oft, but do not end.

And hence to Durlstone is a wall
Of foam-edged cliffs, which sailors fear,
Save in this wind; ah mark!
That course pursued, she soon must fall
Upon the rocks, we almost hear
The master of the barque,
And look upon her deck;—now free
Her jibs are flying, and aback
Her foresails, for awhile
She hangs, the yards swing round, and she
Bounds off; so halts upon his track
The stag, then flies known guile.
A great sea picture, which as boy
I loved, and can recall at will
In cities, in the night;
And then dear memories and joy,
And thoughts which tend past thinking, fill
My heart, and hence I write.

CHOICE OF THE SONNET.

Dante, Colonna, Petrarch, used this lyre,
And many a sweet and solemn strain has shown
Its fitness to express not love alone,
But all that can the noblest verse require.
From them and Angelo my soul caught fire,
Hoping to make this land by sonnets known,
My birthplace, which I love, and I have grown
To join with it some thoughts that high aspire.
Amidst fair scenes, Earth widening to the sight,
Land, sea and sky in light and colours dressed,
Lent by the soul, and more than earthly, glow.
Great Beauty verges to the Infinite;
In Time and Space high instincts will not rest,
Too well their home and whence they came they know.

DURDLEDOOR.

Twin bays this ridge divides,—be this my seat:
Alike, and yet how varying are they,
The cliffs' pure white, fantastic shadows grey
Relieve, and green in patches. See where beat
The waves, long fringe of foam; as they retreat,
Hear roll of pebbles! and I face the Door,
Portal of Minster fallen it seems, and o'er
The sea beyond, my eyes no boundary meet;
Yet opposite quaint Norman peasants walk,
Imagination hears their kindly talk:
Thus too, my life has reached an Ocean's shore
Unbounded,—yet beyond, loved forms I see,
"He tarries long our friend, but soon shall he
Come o'er" (they say) "to join us evermore."

THE FOSSIL FOREST AT LULWORTH.

Stand on this broken cliff awhile, and see
Beneath us, on the ledge, a forest lie,—
Now stone; that prostrate trunk spread once on high
Long fern-like fronds; those boles were each a tree.
The high-piled earth rolls off, the woods wave free,
The sun sheds tropic heat, and reptiles strange
Wing borne, o'er lakes, like ospreys, fishing range;
A poise—a swoop—the spray leaps suddenly!
Now scramble down the cliff: the ancient soil,
Still black, and roots remain. Did human toil
Win food from that? How short is history!
Here countless ages on each other crowd,
And through their mists I trace Eternity,
Looming like Alps with summits hid in cloud.

THE SAIL FROM LULWORTH TO WORBARROW.

Close hauled we pass the Heads; ease off the sail;
The tide's great river flows; and rise and fall,
Slowly the waves in cadence rhythmical:
Our boat moves smoothly, followed by a short trail
Of bubbles; and like music sounds the hail
Of anchored fishermen; from wave to wave
Leaps sunlight; and our boatman stately, grave,
Speaking my own loved tongue, tells many a tale
Of daring feats by smugglers done of old.
What soul to Thee O Poesy is cold?
Hadst thou thy birth 'midst hills or on the strand?
Meanwhile we cross a wide indented bay,
Half oval, edged with cliffs white, brown and grey
And purple, and at Worbarrow we land.

FLOWERSBARROW. THE ROMAN CAMP.

A Roman camp behind,—next south is France,
The sea beneath,—far distant sounds the roar.
A Senate-house, a State some few miles o'er,
I musing see. Shall those poor men advance
Their sway world-wide? Ah mark their earnest glance!
The common-weal they love, the gods adore.
Through brazen gates, see next the Nobles pour!
How ill their pride old love of Rome supplants;
Oh shame! they cringe before that tyrant's eye.
'Neath Atlas camps a Roman general,
Northward centurions still pace the Wall,
Rude races awed admire the fabric high.
What crashed? The Empire see in ruins lie:
The soul! by that the nations rise and fall.

KIMMERIDGE.

A parsonage, farm-house, and here between,
A simple church, and grave-yard; and below
A road with cottages in straggling row;
A vale which northern hills seclude and screen;
Clusters of trees, and pastures ever green;
Yon sea now shining in the evening glow,
Marked with broad bands where tides uneven flow,
One sunlit ship, like a resting swan; the scene
A picture set in blue; 'midst silence deep,
Broken anon by tinkling bells of sheep;
Such Kimmeridge is:—it symbolizes peace.
Whence dreaming where I would, ere dying, rest awhile,
Where aught with Nature not at one might cease:
I think how Earth wears here a mother's smile.

SAINT ALBAN'S HEAD.

O'er Durlstone rising, hither leap the rays,
Here light that great sea-cataract the Race,
Stream westward, shade the bays and gild the face
Of many headlands, making Portland blaze.
Here looks a watchman west with earnest gaze,
(Beacons late lit have flown with lightning pace,
And now all England kneels to God for grace,)
And awed, he sees emerge from morning haze,
The Invincible Armada's huge half-moon;
As wolves the sheep the English follow soon;
Sees all day long roll east that great sea-fight,
Galleons, wounded, lagging, taken, sees,
And hulls sink slow, next sails still filled with breeze,
Till e'en, then blazing ships light up the night.

SWYRE HEAD.

Slow solemn roar of guns from Portland hear,
Shaking the air, see profiled to our right
Cliffs in long line, to the east the Head, the Wight,
Landward grey castle, and my birthplace near,
Sweet memories well up, brush off the tear;
Beyond, wide heaths, sea-inlets gleaming bright,
And boundless distance, bathed in softened light;
Above the clouds their varied summits rear,
Painted with tints beyond all human art,
Like Alps seen distant in the evening sky;
Born with me, love of Nature fills my heart
With silent joy and thoughts that heavenward fly;
Great Instincts, our unconscious nobler part,
Ye move what Reason guides, and deepest lie.

CORFE CASTLE.

The Keep and Corfe beneath,—the Lord and Slave,
Emblem and relic of the reign of Force!
My mind flies back:—Why starts that horse?
Why smiles that Dame?—"The King—he fell not, Knave,
Thou struck'st not home, this Keep shall be thy grave;"
"Lady look down, he drags, a mangled corse;"
In beauty stern she looks, knows no remorse.
Ages roll on, the beautiful and brave
Crowd the court-yard, this morn they hunt the boar,
This eve will pace the Hall in stately grace.
That too,—the reign of Nobles,—flowed away,
When, She, the Brave, artillery heard roar
Fearless, and hence saw, scorning, Cromwell's face;
Time knows no check, see now a ruin grey.

AGGLESTONE.

(By the Abbot of Bindon.)

Our patron Saint is by this rock renowned,
Once Pagans held that Island opposite,
Their Lord the Devil, who with God waged fight;
By Bindon monks, his realm impaired, he found;
('Mongst us might still our forefriends' zeal abound,
But men and manners worsened meet my sight,
And tithes withheld against God's holy right;)
Faded but grand, the Fiend, like King discrowned,
At Bindon hurls, with struggling heave, this rock;
(Oh Saint protect the Innocent, thy flock,)
Sharp screams it, hurtling, through the burdened air;
The Saint who sunlit cloud had seemed, with care,
Stretches her hand; earth shakes with thundering shock;
Hence still to Her, I bring due praise and prayer.

STUDLAND.

MEDITATIONS IN THE CHURCHYARD.

I.

One step from life to death;—a wicket-gate
From sunlight, and a farmyard scattered o'er
With life, to where the yews and elm-trees pour
Down deepest shadows, leads, where stones relate,
When died, how old, how good, how mourned, the Great,
Sods hide the Poor, and hence a few steps more
Would reach the sea, which has beyond a shore
Unseen. I sit and idly meditate.
Life is a dream, in which with blinded eyes,
And frantic struggles to escape, o'ertake,
We fly, we chase what waking we despise,
Where bad with good we mix, think folly wise;
Death, like yon sea, has bounds, the dawn will break,
O'er fairer shores to eyes at last awake.

STUDLAND.

II.

As when a child I woke, and o'er me bent
My mother saw, so there, her eyes will meet
Mine first, and the new-comer friends will greet,
Renewing memories of the life late spent:
For love dies not, and death is only sent,
To kill fear, anger, selfishness, deceit,
The foes of love. This faith can make death sweet:
Oh may it never from my mind be rent.
Yet if it must to hardening science yield,
A guide to good remains, 'gainst bad a shield:
Who nobly lives, lives not by hope or fear;
Like saints to whom yon life was not revealed,
He can the voice of God within him hear,
And unpaid virtue, for itself, hold dear.

STUDLAND.

III.

A vault, the seat of tortures never ending,
Mixed roar of fire, pain, terror, and despair,
Fiends in strange forms, seen dim through dusky air;
Such is the home of men, past hope offending.
See the less guilty slowly upward bending,
With hope, their steps, on that high mountain, where,
Through cleansing pains, they purer grow and fair,
From thence to spheres of light and love ascending;
So Dante saw yon life; an Indian King
(Ere known that lore) would punish, cleanse, by life
From form to form, for life is suffering,
And reach Nirvana so, the end of strife,
Which Buddha surely thought a conscious rest:
To whom first seemed annihilation best?

STUDLAND.

IV.

The world is but a dying and renewing;
Change ever comes with face, now glad, now dread;
The Earth is waning, growing; on the Ocean-bed,
The Continents, sea-born, new lands are strewing;
Stars have their building, and their sure undoing;
Through Death all Forms are onward, upward, led;
Life is a march, and only these, the Dead,
Have reached the goal, and know no change ensuing.
Why then do we, the fugitive, so cherish
Recurring hopes ourselves from change to sever?
Reason in lasting bonds why seek to fetter,
Or Faith by creeds minute, deemed ne'er to perish?
Can that religion live, which changes never?
The spirit stays, but can we keep the letter?

STUDLAND.

V.

If nought without a cause and law of being
Exist, shall we deny God's will, recall
To Heaven the Forces blind and disagreeing,
Huge, formless Gods, whom Zeus drove headlong, all,
Save Fate? She, fearless, whilst the rest were fleeing,
Remained, and oft at some high festival
Of nectar, the Immortals trembled, seeing
Her shadow and dread semblance on the wall.
What though since infant Time,—from stars which face,
As frontier fortresses, the Void, fixed laws
Have bound the world in fetters, and, His Hand
Unseen, what is but order seem the Cause!
Must His will vary, bow to Time or Space?
He made those laws, by Him alone they stand.

STUDLAND.

VI.

How hard the parting! not from friends alone,
And chiefly Her, who has been one with me
So long, and children who have round us grown,
With one in whom my father seems to be;
Earth has become familiar, and well known;
The rivers, woods, the mountains and the sea,
Are my companions, have their beauties shown
To me, how can I leave them willingly?
For twofold is our nature, and if part,
By faith and reverence, can soar above,
It is by effort, and soon flag the wings.
Our greater part is earth-born, and the heart
By that to earth, as to its mother, clings;
But death will purify, not end, our love.

STUDLAND.

VII.

Two aspects, Death, one dread one beauteous, shows,
Like to yon sea; anon 'gainst rocks it dashes
White waves, 'midst lightning, terror, thunder-crashes,
And now sun-wreathed in awful beauty glows.
Hence on one God the Indian priest bestows
Two names, two forms; dread Rudra blood-stained flashes
Through battle dancing, his skull-necklace clashes,
From Shiva's face mysterious calmness flows.
Destroyer and Renewer, Death makes clear
The way by which the Forms to higher rise;
I see the law, the upward march I hear.
If glimpses of great plans thus reach our eyes,
Part seen, upon the rest the soul relies;
Why vainly struggle to escape? Why fear?

STUDLAND.

VIII.

A knell—a pause—again from o'er my head,
The bell tolls out a note of melancholy,
I see the mourners coming hither slowly,
Through flickering lights and shades by elm trees shed.
They bring to rest a village maiden lowly,
Sole daughter of a mother, long since dead;
Her father, nerveless, by his son is led:
Now at the gate, he hears those accents holy.
Once more they bring back faith and hope to him;
Their raising, softening influence, I feel;
A child again, with eyes which tears bedim,
I, folding hands, before my mother kneel;
Oh save from doubts, which darken into night,
Give me O God, more faith, more love, more light!

BUCKNOWLE.

Beneath these elms, a child I used to play,
The goat and dogs my playmates at command,
And here I read my books of fairyland.
The long-lost home revives, and who are they?
Mother, I've been from home so long away,
And learnt much love, since last I felt your hand,
For you and Father, and I understand
Him better now; and could his love repay.
Ah childish talk! And yet, this memory
Is dear, it lives in me, it makes me one;
Though the old home is gone, and I too change.
The seedling grows to sapling, that to tree,
The bubbling fountain, brawling streamlet run
To river,—why the man from child estrange?

MY FATHER.

I was the youngest, and the toy and pet
Of all the house, and clothed in love, I grew;
My Mother's love was open, that I knew
As child; in tears we parted, gleeful, met.
His love I scarcely saw, though deeper yet,
For it was proud and shy, unknown how true;
The proofs a child could recognize were few:
Oft duty seemed less gratitude than debt.
My Father's face, and her soft eyes, return
To me, a father now; what lay concealed,
I see, how he for equal love might yearn;
But love descends; my son will find revealed
My love, by his; I bow resigned my head;
Yet love, alas, comes idly to the dead.

KNOWLE.

Through leafy lanes approached, 'midst trees, lies Knowle;
The houses from a deep-set road retreat,
Hiding behind tall flowers, and seem to meet
The Parsonage, making one pictured whole.
A church close by; the grave-stones bear a roll
Of names I loved as child, almost complete,
And soon to be closed; with thoughts half sad, half sweet,
I hear the bell its Sunday bidding toll.
'Tis dear to me as bringing back to mind
A Lady with some children, a small knot,
Long parted, and it must touch others less;
And yet I think all city-dwellers find,
When brought to Nature home, I know not what,
In her of reverence mixed with tenderness.

KNOWLE CHURCHYARD.

I.

Again the Bell,—again the Church,—again
I come to bring my Brother
Home to his wife; my Mother
With him she loved has since my youth here lain.
Not now, as then, the pain;
He who draws near to dying
Feels still the harmonies that Nature bind,
Strengthen o'er him their reign;
Not fearing not defying,
He can in death a part of living find:
And if, while Faiths are flying,
No doubts have rested in his firmer mind,
He hears One say, as ends with death the strife,
"I am the Resurrection and the Life."

KNOWLE CHURCHYARD.

II.

I pray it may not be
That age make cold my heart:
When 'midst sad friends, with gasping, sighing breath,
A life is fluttering, flying,
Not that alone is death:
But where no sympathy,
No love, no noble passion, has a part,
That is not life but dying.

III.

And I would be with Nature oft alone,
And watch the mighty Forces,
And know them not life-sources,
But as the changeless courses
Of God's eternal will; so higher grown,
My soul, as from a mountain-top, might trace,
Only the grand and fair, unseen aught base.

KNOWLE CHURCHYARD.

IV.

Why speak ye thus of forming, guiding Will,
When Matter given and given its constant laws,
From that sufficient cause,
The Earth, the Sea, the Heaven, would rise and fill,
Life would have birth and mount to higher life,
In order long, as when some general,
With soldiers victors in the nations' strife,
Climbed to the Capitol.
Need ye a Deity?
Then raise again yon stone,
With this inscription, "to the God unknown,"
And worship One whom Reason cannot see.

KNOWLE CHURCHYARD.

V.

But if, within the bounds of space and time,
Our outward senses are our only guides,
And yet within resides
A sense still whispering Infinity,
Shall I refuse above those bounds to climb?
Without, within, our senses are divine,
And they, who truth to part alone confine,
Teach ill Philosophy.
These narrow vales draw in the range of sight,
Too long I've lived thus low,
At eve ere comes my night,
I would ascend the mountains,
And through the cornfields, vineyards, pine-woods go,
Passing the blue ice-fountains,
Then up the slopes of snow.
Yon clouds, which show beneath their swarthy lining,
Seen from above, in heavenly light are shining.

KNOWLE CHURCHYARD.

VI.

The light through trees and latticed windows streaming
Makes bright the bier in patches;
Whilst I am of our youth together dreaming,
I hear a hymn in snatches.
"Not 'midst Sinai's rolling thunder,
When from peak to peak leapt flashes,
Not when David sank to ashes,
God disclosed his secret wonder:
Seers nought of that could see.
But upon a spring-tide morning,
When flowers the hills were wreathing,
From a tomb, came poor men breathing
Joyful tidings, solemn warning,
Death is Immortality."

KNOWLE CHURCHYARD.

VII.

(Revisited, 1874.)

So young, so dear, so fair!
I hoped full soon to hear her wedding-chime,
And now I hear her knell.
Ah me! I loved her well;
A beauty full and rare,
Which yet reached not its prime;
For in her speech and eyes and truth-lit face,
She kept I know not what of childlike grace;
And in her heart dwelt loving sympathy,
Proper to womanhood.
She bore some love to me,
But her whole nature turned towards my brother,
And him she understood,
And ever sought his side,
As though some bond those hearts together tied;
There are such bonds, I know.

May be he saw in her, again, her mother,
As she came home his bride,
Feeling a breath of Spring, youth's rosy glow;
And yet his love was rather felt than spoken.
Ah me! that bond is broken:
One fair face more, I see
'Midst forms which haunt my age increasingly.

ON THE PORTRAIT OF A DECEASED FRIEND.

His pupil first;—and then, his friend I grew,
And rolling years had closer drawn our ties;
Through features delicate, and soft brown eyes,
A beauteous soul shone out, kind, good, and true,
Which no mean passion felt, for nobler, knew
Just limits; learned, circumspect, and wise,
With rarest modesty. I did not prize
Thee rightly Friend; the years too quickly flew.
Now, as I mount to age, I oft look back,
And see loved forms, long lost, loved voices hear;
From ice-clad heights, I scan my upward track;
The lanes through which I hastened, now seem near,
Murmur again the brooks;—the mist-veil breaks,
O God! I see, beyond, the sunlit peaks.

IN MEMORIAM.*

My life goes ill, the world is dark and strange,
Since thy late setting, oh my only light.
Through the same scenes, which, present, thou mad'st bright,
Now cold and dark, I solitary range.
Alas! not theirs, I know, but mine, the change.
Once, if I left thy side and daily sight,
O'er parting seas, my soul to thee took flight,
In thought I saw thee share my joys and pains,
And count the weary days ere my return,
And ever present was thy gentle face.
A wider sea now parts us, black and stern,
O'er which the way, my thoughts can scarcely trace;
And yet, I know, thou pacest on yon shore,
Longing for me to join thee evermore.

* Thoughts extracted from a poem by a Friend.

A GRAVE REVISITED.

On my heart too, then seemed the sods to fall,
And thee, I saw not, for the blinding tear,
Nought but the bursts of grief within, could hear,
Like wailing horns at some great funeral.
At last, the calm is come, and I recall
Thy gentle face and voice, and feel thee near;
Thy hand I strive to hold; from thee, I fear
To part, my friend, companion, guide in all.
And now in some great Minster seem I led,
Where light, through saints and martyrs, varied, plays,
On life-like statues of the mighty dead.
The organ, thousand-voiced, sweet floods outpours,
'Twixt which the sacred song clear voices raise;
From doubts, to faith and love, my spirit soars.

THE DOWNS.

The boy, returned from school to home,
  Hastes out loved memories to renew,
  The farm, the horses, dogs, to view,
And spots where he had loved to roam.
So I was wont, in yon glad time,
With joyous bounds, this Hill to climb.

Now, slow and sad, the top I reach,
  And see the Hill-chain, like a mound
  By giants made, smooth, straight and round,
From Swanage roll to Corfe, to Creech,
And there an outwork northward send,
Thence on past castled Lulworth trend.

Two scenes, how different, how fair!
  The white-cliffed Isle, blue sea beneath,
  Bright lakes, the brown and purple heath,
Far north, low hills which melt to air,
On this side uplands, and between,
A valley narrow, still, and green.

A Church, near which those much-loved Dead
Have homes, with trees in clusters, all
In sunshine gleaming, save where fall
Cloud-shadows; 'neath me lies outspread,
The land, of which I strove to tell
In rhyme; O Native Land farewell.

HOME TO-NIGHT.

Sleep no longer, Brothers! rise;
Through this window, I can see
The East grow bright;
Long I've watched, with sleepless eyes,
Thinking, gladsome, we shall be
At home to-night.

Risen, the horn and measured trot,
Jingling harness, louder grow;
The coach in sight!
Mount it, greetings matter not,
Who can linger when we go
To home to-night.

As we onward travel slow,
Day-spring, morn, and noon, pass o'er,
Till evening light
Makes yon ruined Castle glow,
Then remain but few steps more
To home to-night.

See them! Mother, Father, all!
Youngest, dearest, arms I feel
Clasp round me tight,
Mother's tears upon me fall,
Father's glances to me steal,
At home to-night.

All those dear ones dead and gone,
Nought remains but memories sweet
Of past delight;
Day with me is almost done,
Mother's kisses shall I meet
At home to-night?

A PICTURE.

A lady, fair, and young, and in her hand
Is—what?—head raised, far-reaching eyes,
Mouth closed—a letter open lies;
A letter!—portrait!—Ah—I understand.

"Lady! here in writing see,
What my glances,
Absent trances,
Oft have said,—I love but thee.
Face which Truth hath made her seat,
Features delicate and sweet,
Not without a dignity
Suiting birth and ancestry;
Varied feelings there have play,
Like the clouds on summer day,
But though changing ever true;
Eyes like sky in depth and hue,
Lofty mind built broad and deep,
Love lies there, perhaps asleep;

Such thy image on my heart
Graven, never to depart;
Fairest, dearest, thee I love."

So writes he?—thou dost well to meditate;
Not thine a half-life, poor and dim;
But is that fuller life with him?
To love all loves? or else repent and hate?

"But not those charms, those only, move;
A higher feeling
Is o'er me stealing,
An angel-breathing from above.
My mother's truth, and solid sense,
With faith, and love, and innocence,
Taught me her sex to reverence,
Like her I see thee pious, good,
A type of perfect womanhood.
Thou'rt fair to others, nay to all,
To me, that high ideal,
Which born in childhood, with me grows,
Round which my higher instincts close."

Well pleaded! Passion only could not move;
Though that is present in her soul,
Else left unrounded to a whole,
There Faith and Duty sit supreme,—not Love.

"But joining me, thou yet may'st learn
A sense of right more definite,
Hard justice, courage, honour stern,
With wider knowledge, keener sight;
I for thy virtues too shall yearn,
Hope, tenderness, and heavenly light;
So higher, purer, shall return
Our souls to Him, when comes the night."

Dream I?—or grasped more firmly is that hand?
That portrait soon her lips will press,
The rapt face melt to tenderness
With tears, then smiling,—Do I understand?

THE COMPANION PICTURE.

See !—a casement and beyond how fair !
Heath, and pine-woods, hence descending,
Rolling, changing, half dimmed o'er
By a golden veil of hazy air,
To a sea which seems unending,
Level sun-rays o'er it pour.

Above empurpled clouds are lying,
Are they clouds or ocean,
Rippling in short motion,
With gentle breezes o'er it flying ?

Lady, by the casement sitting, still,
Lips apart, and eyes upraising,
Ringed hand 'midst the auburn hair
Of a boy asleep,—what sad thoughts fill
Thee, and why that earnest gazing ?
Why that faded letter there ?

I hear—Is Fancy me misleading?
An organ swell, then die away,
And the lady, musing, say
Some fragment of late reading.

"But joining me, thou yet mayst learn
A sense of right, more definite,
Hard justice, courage, honour stern,
A wider knowledge, keener sight;
I, for thy virtues, too, shall yearn,
Hope, tenderness, and heavenly light;
So higher, purer, shall return
Our souls to Him, when comes the night."

Husband, the night has come;
In that long agony
I could not see thee,
And how willingly
I would have followed home;
But thou forbadest; from that letter
I drew a spirit higher, better,

To give this dear one love at heart,
And faith and purity impart,
Teach him to know his father's worth,
And live as fits such noble birth;
And then to sink, all duties done,
Faith lending splendours, like yon sun.
Ah that meeting,
Joyous greeting,
Life together evermore!

That letter first seemed proud;
Thank God for light,
And clear insight,
To choose aright:
Sweet memories on me crowd.
I loved my father, as my brother
With love past speaking, loved our mother;
Then came, in that glad time of youth,
A love past all in depth and truth,
And He, the Proud, my love to meet,
Poured from a nature high and sweet,

All treasures, till our unity
Grew perfect, and though now it be—
No, still it lives, and this boy left,
I am not here of love bereft;
Hence nought forgot,
I now grieve not,
Simply wait, till Death the Lost restore.

But hear! the organ-tones are ringing,
Flute with viol mingles,
Bugles, voices, cymbals,
Blend there like a thousand angels singing.

Swelling, quivering, sinking, dies the strain,
The awe and welling sweetness yet remain;
The evening skies 'midst fluttering, waning, light,
Their crimson pale to rose, to grey; till Night,
Reigns solemn, 'midst the stars, her courtiers bright.

SUNRISE. BUCKNOWLE.

My own life's day not long begun,
In silence creeping,
I went to greet the birth of the Sun,
All sleeping.

Not yet the East has doffed its grey,
And the mist hangs lightly
Along the brook, the Moon shows the way,
Not brightly;

Then paler grows, and the Castle high,
In ruins lasting,
Throws up grey towers, 'gainst yellow sky
Contrasting.

And now of the coming life I dream,
My spirit flushing,
How I shall go 'neath skies, which seem
All blushing.

And with me goes in the golden lands,
Unseen by others,
A child; and loving we hold hands,
As brothers.

The Eastern cloud-streaks ruddy grow,
His gateway wreathing;
Or do they from sun-steeds' nostrils flow,
Fire-breathing?

And now the fire has caught the Keep,
Whence quick descending,
Along the Hills the sun-rays leap
West trending.

He comes! I hold my breath suppressed
With awe I tremble;
For his splendours God's own image best
Resemble.

But as he rises, and I am home
Returning lonely,
I feel, that the splendours have become
Day only.

SUNSET. HIGHGATE.

At eve, now waning my own life's light,
I lie here thinking;
Yon sun came from the unknown and in night
Is sinking.

In rose and azure began his way,
Promising fairly;
But clouds and storms about him lay,
Not rarely.

High in mid heaven he ran on strong,
Working bravely,
At length declining, the clouds among,
Sinks gravely.

But for a setting like his I sigh,
Hope and Faith lending,
Those blue and crimson splendours to my
Descending.

He gone, for a time the clouds still give
Reflected glory;
As awhile men's noble actions live
In story.

And though from the clouds now faded be
Their golden lining;
Not all is dark; dear God! I see
Stars shining.

THE FAIRIES.

With the Fairies I've been dancing
All the night;
Where, through aspens glancing,
Falls the trembling light.

Standing lamps of glow-worms brightly,
Shining green,
Fire-flies, circling lightly,
Flickering, lit the scene.

On each foxglove there a fairy
Had her seat,
Piping dance-tunes airy,
With a straw of wheat.

But this Fairy-land, where is it,
Tell me Dear?
Why, a place I often visit,
No great way from here.

"What are fairies?" Beings tiny,
Hardly seen,
Air-forms, coloured, shiny,
Loving night and e'en.

Might I bring you, I but lately
Asked the Queen;
But she answered, stately,
Servant long he has been

To my Sister, and her teaching
Follows he,
Sweet, but high, and reaching
To Infinity.

Her I know not, but love dancing
In the night,
Fairy strains entrancing,
Fire-flies shedding light.

TWO VOICES. IN MEMORIAM.

I stand beside an open grave,
Where lies a late-lost, much-loved Friend;
Oh Friend from youth, thy love I crave,
Has now our friendship in this grave its end?

Or shall I meet thee yet once more?
A hope of joy a mighty fear;
Glad words, and holy, round me pour,
But yet another voice, I seem to hear.

Seek not to know; in vain the Blind await the light,
Nor can the Finite grasp the Infinite;
What can be known is bounded by the mind,
A circle huge, but still too well defined;
Within, the light of knowledge reigns, without,
The night of ignorance and misty doubt.

So, in a circle traced by magic wand,
The Sage stands safe from demons' baffled band;
And travellers ringed by fires, with unmoved face,
See shadowy lions around them pace.

Accept this truth; of nought we know the cause,
Event succeeds event by certain laws:
Do those laws vary, in slow change involved?
An ancient doubt, a question ne'er resolved.
From laws which rule the birth and death of tree,
And brute, which guide the Earth, control the Sea,
Enchain the Stars, shall man alone be free?

Atoms arranged give birth to Life, a force
To Matter wedded, suffering no divorce;
So born at first, whilst countless ages ran,
Rising from Form to Form, and span by span,
Through long gradations, climbed the Worm to Man.

"Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust."

Yes,—this body, lying low,
Must decay,
Change to clay;
But the soul, I trust, I know,
Comes from God, to Him shall go.

This, I hear the breezes sigh,
Sages hoar
From of yore,
Dim remembrance, instincts high,
Teach, the Soul can never die.

Surer hope, and trust, have we,
Hark! God speaks,
Silence breaks,
Death henceforth from sting be free,
Grave where now thy victory?

Perish that dust,—Friend I see
Thee again, thou smil'st on me.

"For they rest from their labours."

A golden haze o'er Earth at evening glows,
And clouds, now rose, now purple, level lie,
Isles, cliffs, and shores of blue-green lakes of sky;
So Faith on Reason, colour, light, bestows.
The laws of Nature veil God's awful eye,
To us, so little, still his distance grows,
But He, the Absolute, no distance knows,
Nor time, He works from near, and ever is close by.

More clearly yet, unveil O God! Thy light,
More closely reason with my faith unite.

"Evermore amen."

The service ended, closed the book,
Finished the last long-lingering look,
Through country lanes we homeward go,
Talking of him in accents low.

Our pathway winds 'neath elm-trees high,
Where chequered lights and shadows lie,
'Twixt scented banks where eglantine,
Wild hops and woodbine, tangled, twine.

Beyond, blue sea, scarce severed sky,
Long shores, a white-cliffed Island lie,
With ships like sea-gulls poised in air,
Landward the chalk-downs round and bare,

Pine-woods, and heaths, green fields, and corn,
O'er which cloud-shadows slow are borne;
And all is silent as in sleep,
Save from the tinkling bells of sheep.

Fair Nature, whilst man comes and goes,
Pursues her course, no sorrow knows,
Her calm I feel, the hot tears cease;
I mourn thee Friend! but mourn in peace.

ECHOES.

Not sudden drop the waves, when cease
Storms long abiding,
But slow, then slower, heave, to peace
At length subsiding.
The harp, which yielded music long,
In each string quivers;
The bird, that ends ecstatic song,
Still thrills and shivers.
When song, then silence, friends who stray
'Midst Alps, rejoices,
From near, then faint, from far away
Come back the voices.
So passions, which have ceased to burn,
Yet leave their traces;
Dead voices oft to me return,
And long-lost faces.

MR. FAWCETT.

Where may I, Liberty, thy features see?
In journals writ, and read by gabbling fools,
The slaves of Fashion, Faction's lying tools,
In votes conceded by mad theory,
(The basest governing,) I see not thee.
But Truth in all, entire, and accurate,
And which no priestly guides emasculate,
Which laws enforce, that, *that* is liberty.
No true religion can true science fear,
Both come direct from God, and both cohere;
He, who pretends infallible to be,
Must needs dread History; whom, when, of late,
Our Chieftain, erring, would conciliate,
Fawcett, thou nobly brok'st from party free.

CONCURRENT ENDOWMENT.

Your thought is false, and worthy of false minds,
That we, who knowledge love, not dogmas, creeds,
And follow truth, still careless where she leads,
Who scorn and hate the prejudice that blinds,
Whom Church infallible nor warps nor binds,
Should taint the mind of youth with falsehood. No,
That art is yours, false miracles who show,
And wink at lies, where Priesthood profit finds.
Priest-governed schools, endowed, ye well may hope,
To wring from balanced factions, not from us;
For well-drilled slaves serve you, ye serve the Pope;
But palsy, from dead limbs, the heart will reach,
And so will die, the schools in which ye teach
Science half mangled by the Syllabus.

GERMAN UNITY.

Well said "French wrong shall make the Germans one;"
From all 'twixt Saxon hills and Baltic strand,
From Gaul to slavish Pole, we, gathered, stand,
Few breathless moments; then at Wörth we stun,
And crush the foe; the work is well begun;
The battle-march, like thunder-cloud, with flash
On flash, rolls on; again I hear the crash
At blood-stained Gravelotte; on we northward run,
An army, Emperor captive, sees Sedan:
How long shalt thou survive such shame, proud man?
Paris, 'midst ice and snow long sieged, is won;
Our German Kaiser crowned, let Versailles see,
Best symbol of the German Unity,
Which, dearly gained, we'll keep disturbed by none.

BISMARCK.

Bismarck, shall priests disjoin the scarce knit state,
Thy work? Who said "be Germans if you will,
But first be Catholics?" base man, be still;
Cavour, who would the priests conciliate
To make his Italy united, great,
This maxim feigned, let Church in State be free.
Serve Pope and scorn the King, that liberty
Ye ask? not such Cavour would tolerate.
One people are we, can two sovereigns reign?
To bind our knowledge, paralyse the mind
Ye seek, and Germany to split in twain.
Bismarck, I lately deemed thy life-task o'er,
But Fatherland requires thee yet once more,
Her foes to quell, the loosened bond, rebind.

THE UNITED STATES.

Hero, or Rebel, was your Washington?
To found a Nation—that seems great and good,
Divide a Race, of which the dread and flood,
Had else poured over all,—was that well done?
What fame arose from battles, lost and won
'Twixt kinsmen? Cover up those pools of blood.
If we again remember brotherhood,
Think that ye too have fought for union.
Oh God of love! shall this great English Race,
Which one tongue, one glory in the past, should tie,
Yield to one quarrel and unworthy hate,
Its hopes and strength to come? Ah no; I trace
A nobler future, see a vision high,
That Race o'er all the world confederate.

NELSON.

"England expects," ('twas thus the signal ran,)
"Each man to do his duty,"—words of flame,
Kindling the hearts of sailors, who o'ercame
United France and Spain. The Englishman
Reverence for duty learnt, as life began;
Hence He, who knew not fear, spoke not of fame,
But chose for Englishmen, that nobler name.
Unwind the rolls, man's blood-stained annals scan,
The storm of battle hear, and mark the throng,
See nation yield to nation, race to race;
What makes the empires fall, that ruled so long?
The fires of love of God and country, trace,
Here rising, sinking there in ashes base:
Know that by virtue only, men are strong.

TRADES' UNIONS.

To serve both God and country, yet be free,
Our Fathers strove, and thus made England great.
Do we then owe no duty to the State?
No common bond but selfishness, have we?
Can that the spring of noble action be,
And what gives birth in families to hate,
Amongst a people, union create?
On nobler passions rests Society;
By love of God and country, England stands.
Why range the Classes into separate bands?
Would ye our country into factions tear,
Pursuing each its selfish ends? not far,
I see the Furies, blood, and civil war,
Soldiers with chains, the Tyrant—Friends forbear.

BUDDHA.

Rishis in simple hymns, like poets true,
The winds, the sky, the sea personified.
Dull priests,—no poets they,—thus led aside,
Hard gods from myths and rainbow fancies drew,
With mad theology, and doctrines new;
To their gross minds some simple fable told
Of lewd and cruel gods, which meant of old,
The Sun drives off the dawn, dispels the dew.
A King, since Buddha named, scorned this, and he,
High morals, mystic lore, in forests found,
Which Councils alter, add to, and decree
A Lama's false infallibility,
And reason bind, whilst praying tops abound.
To us, no lesson brings this history?

SENTIMENT.

The laws of Nature swerve not, are severe;
Who bad, or weak, obeys them not, must die.
Beneath cold face, they hide a purpose high,
From bad and weak, alike, the world to clear.
"Oh save the weak, *his* fate deserves a tear."
Peace man! can'st thou a wiser rule supply?
"Man's laws from God's must differ;"—but say why;
For the same port, why different courses steer?
And laws, which suit its end, best please a state,
Willing men strong and happy, wise and great.
When men live idle on the provident,
When, vice and crime less hated, laws relent,
Can industry increase, can ills abate?
Then wisdom rules not, but false sentiment.

LIBERTÉ, EGALITÉ, FRATERNITÉ.

Frenchmen, be equal brotherly and free!
The motto this,—the flag, red, white, and blue:
But that means equal wealth and power to you.
In liberty can men thus equal be,
So various born, in force, capacity?
If free, the many sink, and rise the few;
What keeps them level then, if this be true,
Must be, not liberty, but tyranny.
Freedom to rise I grant, needs some restraint,
Since for the many must exist the state;
But your equality from envy springs.
Fraternity! makes that this odour faint
Of blood, and governments to fluctuate,
And civil war, with which all Europe rings?

LIVINGSTONE. WESTMINSTER ABBEY, APRIL, 1874.

Thy honours, Livingstone, have come too late,
The Minster, organ thousand-voiced, the band
Of friends, the open grave,—not these command
My thoughts, but Thou, thy character and fate.
And, urged by thy own travel-instinct great,
I wander now in that mysterious land,
Through silent forest glades, where palm trees stand,
Which these high aisles but poorly imitate.
And in thy life-long wanderings, I can read
Heroic aims, which there unspoken lie.
To free, to elevate a race long lost.
What though the path to friendless death must lead;
Who nobly lives, adopts a purpose high,
And drives right onward, counting not the cost.

FINAL CAUSES.

Ah! why this eager questioning?
When still too feeble is our sight
To scan or reach the infinite,
And cause remains a hidden thing,
Our thought of which can only spring
From knowledge of our own will's might;
Whence we, who cause with will unite,
That thought as rule, to Nature bring.
Enough, though certain knowledge fail,
If noble instincts urge the mind,
And reason hold a due control.
And when anon Faith lifts the veil,
Showing great Forms with One behind
Lit up—What awe!—How beautiful!

REASON AND FAITH.

Fixed order of events, perhaps a chain
Of causes, reaching up, till seen no more,
And fields of knowledge, ever laboured o'er,
This then, O Reason, is thy whole domain.
Here, by thy own laws fixed, thou must remain,
To number, weigh, and measure, to explore,
Infer, deduce, without the power to soar,
For bonds of Time and Space thy wings restrain.
But following Faith, my other guide, I rise
Amidst Infinities, and see the Hand
Which ends and holds that chain, with dazzled eyes.
Like statues veiled, the Forces round me stand,
That one Will rules the whole, I recognize,
Not tracing how or why the world is planned.

RELIGIOUS SYMBOLISM.

A god in marble! masterpiece and pride
Of Grecian art, majestic form and face,
Where power and thought are mixed with solemn grace,
Yet only human nature deified.
Can men err so, think gods in stone can hide?
No; seeking past the bounds of time and space
To raise the mind to Heaven, they but debase
Their gods to man by symbols vainly tried.
Not as deceiving therefore God forbade
Each image, but because man cannot rise
By any symbols to infinity.
They chain to sense; that flight by the soul is made
On its own wings with force that inmost lies;
And Symbolism is true Idolatry.

POSTSCRIPT.

As when an artist, wont alone to roam
In summer-tide along the mountain rivers,
    Returns, in autumn, home,
    And paints some treasured scene,
For him sunlight through birch and ash-tree quivers
On rocks, and rushing waters, and brown foam,
    And banks all overgrown
With ferns and moss, here pale and there black-green;
That beauty painted draws from memory
A joy, and yet seems dwarfed and less his own:
Or as a mother sends her boy to see
Her friends in youth, long severed and scarce known,
Her loving looks and fingers o'er him straying,
    She seeks to show his best,
With heart 'twixt fear and hope alternate swaying:
So I, yon paintings of my own birth-nest,
And what I silent felt, and silent thought,
    Send now to friends alone.

Our last, our noblest love is permanence,
Alas! so vainly sought;
But I—I crave not aught,
Save that, when sunk my sun in shadows dense,
My image here may live for friendly eyes
Awhile in fading light;
As when a statue, flushed by evening skies,
Pales to faint rose, then shadowy formless white.

EDWARD NEWMAN, PRINTER, DEVONSHIRE STREET, BISHOPSGATE.

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